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RAMBLES AND STUDIES

IN

GREECE.

84517
BY

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'PROLEGOMENA TO ANCIENT HISTORY;'
'KANT'S PHILOSOPHY FOR ENGLISH READERS;'
'SOCIAL LIFE IN GREECE;'
ETC.

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PREFACE.

At the present crisis in the East of Europe, when there seems some hope that a new order of things may be established, and the basis of some better progress attained, it would be unjust to the Greek nation, were this book with its various strictures and complaints to go forth without a clear statement of the other side of the picture. It is very much the fashion of travellers from the great nations to compare the little which the Greeks can do, and have done, with what might have been done with larger resources by other nations; and hence we have constant criticism, and wholesale detraction, of the new Hellas, its government, and its people.

I confess myself not to have been free from this impatience when I travelled in Greece, and that the daily reflection upon what remained un-

done was but too apt to obscure the merits of those who have done what they could, and have done a great deal, for the resuscitation of their country. This feeling appears in many parts of the following sketches. But though it be too outspoken—a fact which I sincerely regret—I have resolved to retract nothing which had been written, because it will show that what I am now about to say on behalf of the modern Greeks is not the advocacy of a partisan, but the admission forced with difficulty from a somewhat adverse critic. I am no enthusiast about the modern, any more than about the ancient, Greeks, as I have elsewhere plainly shown. But common fairness demands that, if we are ready to blame and to advise the Greeks about their internal dissensions in days of peace and quietness, we ought also in days of trouble and agitation—when the rights of neighbour nations are being urged by powerful and partial advocates—to stand forth and declare on behalf of the Greeks their greater promise, and their juster claims.

It is indeed ridiculous to agitate Europe about the rights of Bulgarians and Servians, when the vastly more intelligent, more peaceable, more

civilised Greek subjects of the Porte are suffering under equal oppression, and are harassed with even greater injustice. What have the southern Slavs of Europe to show in comparison with the Greeks? Consider the trade of Smyrna and of Alexandria, of Syra and of Patras; it is due to the enterprise of the Greeks. Consider the education given free at Athens to all who desire it—the numerous schools, the fine university, the archæological and classical periodicals which it produces; and compare all this with Servia! I will say even more—that through the wildest parts of Greece there is an average of education, and of general intelligence, which is not equalled by many parts of the great kingdoms of western Europe.

It is this very intelligence and activity of mind which has often endangered the peaceful development of Greece, and has tended to falsify the estimates of modern Greece among foreign nations. The people find agricultural pursuits not to their taste; they think with the son of Sirach, 'How can he have wisdom, whose talk is of bullocks?' On the contrary, trade and politics have for them, as they had for their ancestors, endless attractions. It follows that the agricultural resources of the

country are not developed, while the study of politics has been driven too far.

Both these defects have been greatly aggravated by the miserably narrow boundaries assigned by European politicians to the Greek kingdom. By refusing to include Thessaly and Epirus within the kingdom, the Turkish frontier has been left so near Athens that any criminal or miscreant can escape over the border—still worse, that bands of brigands can reside in Turkey, and carry on their depredations in the neighbourhood of Athens. Nothing has created a stronger and a more lasting prejudice against the Greeks than this matter of brigandage. Yet it is impossible to deny the force of the perpetual and consistent reply of the Greeks, that the Morea, which they are able to control, has been for years perfectly free from all danger, and that the existence of brigandage in northern Greece up to 1870 is simply due to the want of honest co-operation in the Turkish authorities on the frontier. Ever since the appointment of a vigorous governor in Thessaly, even this danger has disappeared. But as the duration of such security depends altogether on the strange accident of the Porte appointing an efficient and

honest officer, it seems quite plain that the frontier should be rectified, and that the Greek-speaking islands, and provinces of Thessaly and Epirus should be added to the kingdom of Greece. The main body of the population will readily join the Greeks, and the small minority of Turks will continue unmolested in the enjoyment of a greater liberty. This is proved by the case of Eubœa, where some 10,000 Turks are to the present day living in peace and contentment under Greek government. The latter fact, which seems hardly known, speaks volumes for the justice and the liberality of the Greeks, and shows how different is the rule of Greek over Turk from that of Turk over Greek. Whether the Servians, who have been lately persecuting the Jews, would show similar forbearance, is more than doubtful.

But it is difficult to speak with patience of the claims of the turbulent and mischievous Servians, in comparison with the Greeks. Yet, when all men are talking of the expulsion of the Ottoman government from Constantinople, and the establishment of a great Slavonic confederation in its European provinces, it is monstrous that the obvious claims of the Greeks to hold Constantinople,

and the islands of the Levant, should be overlooked. Such a settlement of the European question is perhaps far too good to be hoped for; but the advantages to the world are so manifest that we cannot refrain from indulging in the prospect. While the insurgent provinces would resume their pristine insignificance under some sort of parliamentary, and therefore unsuitable and mischievous government, the Greek empire would become, like the Athenian hegemony of old, a great stretch of coasts and islands round the Levant, and now too, as it formerly was, *attexta barbariæ*—a fringe round barbarism. Thus an intelligent and neutral power would hold the Bosphorus, and save Europe from the impotence of its present, or the ambition of its expectant, masters.

But if the newer Hellas is to revive the memories and the bounds of the Athens of Pericles, and again be a civilising border on barbarism, it must, I feel sure, imitate the Athens of Pericles in another respect, and become λόγῳ μὲν δημοκρατία, ἔργῳ δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ πρώτου ἀνδρὸς δυναστεία. The admiration for constitutional government is so excessive in modern Europe, that any one who says a word in favour of limited freedom is likely to be insulted

by his best friends. But in spite of this danger, I will insist upon it, that hardly any nations of the world are fit for parliamentary government, especially as that sort of government means government by party. The case of Ireland is constantly before me; and I speak the opinion of most men whom one knows as experienced in Irish politics, and who are not themselves trading on party, when I maintain that a Governor-General, with large powers, and a fixed tenure of office, would rule the country vastly better than the ever-changing Chief Secretaries, and the ever ignorant or impatient House of Commons.

I believe the Greeks to be in a somewhat similar stage of political development; and therefore the best form of rule for them would be an intelligent and disinterested Dictator—an αἰσυμνήτης, like old Pittacus—chosen, as the king was, by themselves, but entrusted with the interests of the country for a considerable number of years. If this be impossible—not only because of the bugbear of despotism, but because they already possess a king too constitutional to undertake such a position—then let the Greeks determine to appoint their Ministry, not upon the precarious basis of a party

majority, but for a fixed term, say five years, so that Greek ministers may be relieved from the perpetual anxiety about their majority, and consider exclusively the serious interests of their country.

Such a law would obviate the second great opprobrium under which they lie among foreigners—the perpetual changes of ministry, and the perpetual combinations of bitter opponents to overthrow the party for the moment in power. This is, no doubt, a serious reproach to the Greeks, an almost necessary impotence in their policy, and apparently the strongest illustration of that old national feature—jealousy—with which they are universally credited. It is idle to deny that this is a prominent feature in the Greek character, and that it has constantly brought them into disagreeable contact with foreigners nationally; so that, while travellers uniformly attest the hospitality and kindliness of the individual Greeks whom they meet, they constantly make reflections upon the general jealousy which the nation displays towards foreign interference. Well-known examples of this are the matter of the Laurium mines, and the late discussions about the German excavations at Olympia. The former question is very compli-

cated, and there is a good deal of conflicting evidence; as to the latter, it has been fairly and ably handled in the June number (1876) of the Greek *Athenæum*, in reply to some remarks of Professor S. Colvin in the *Academy*. The writer shows that the government ceded to the Germans the right of withholding their discoveries for five years, in order to secure the first publication of them, and that notices in the Greek papers were even prohibited. It is not therefore unnatural that many Greeks should grumble, seeing that part of the expense of excavating was borne by the Greek government, and that all discoveries made by Greeks are forthwith publicly exhibited.

But, apart from these special controversies, it is obvious that the Greeks are in a very difficult and delicate position as to their antiquities, and that any natural jealousy must necessarily be brought out strongly by the force of circumstances. Let me again cite the parallel case of the Irish. Here is a nation, once impoverished and oppressed by unjust laws and restrictions, so that now, when these obstacles are removed, they find themselves behind-hand in comparison with the Scotch and English, and have neither the capital nor the

energetic habits necessary for developing the resources of their country. Yet, though the natural riches of the country are buried in the earth, and though there is no immediate prospect of recovering them, there is a sort of vague pride in them—a sentimental feeling that they are national property, which would have been utilised but for foreign tyranny; and, accordingly, when English capitalists come over, and propose to invest their money in Irish enterprise—be it fisheries, or mines, or agriculture—the jealousy of the natives has been known to overcome their common sense: they damage machinery, they write a threatening letter, they even sometimes use personal violence, and so a few malcontents frighten away the very capital of which we are ever regretting the absence. All this is very sad; but it is natural, and is to be cured, not by scolding, but by education.

The case of the Greeks is even more natural, and therefore more excusable. The greatest wealth of the country, and that which gives it an inestimable value in the eyes of all Europe, is its rich store of art remains, which are not the natural product of the soil, but the handiwork of people whom the modern Greeks regard as their direct

ancestors. It cannot be expected that they should avoid being jealous of foreigners carrying away these treasures, and adorning with them the museums of foreign capitals. Most of them are, indeed, as yet undiscovered or unrestored, and strangers are quite willing to spend their own money in excavating sites which the Greeks have no means to explore. But even in this case, it is not fair to call the Greeks jealous and selfish, when they object or refuse, and insist on waiting for the day when they can recover them for themselves, and preserve them as imperishable treasures for their country. For while the agricultural capitalist must enrich the country which he improves, the archæological capitalist, if not bound under the strictest conditions, does nothing of the sort, and may even strip the country of all its wealth. It is then fairly to be expected that the Greeks should be jealous of foreign interference in this matter; nor do I think that their present want of means is at all a fair argument to use in silencing their objections.

As to the agricultural development of Greece, there is no doubt that the Morea is in some parts really well cultivated; the plain of Argos, for

example, looks as rich and fair in early summer as a scene in Kent or Surrey. But in northern Greece such great tracts as the plains of Thebes and Orchomenus, and the valley of Marathon, present a very different aspect, partly on account of the recent presence of bandits, but partly for want of adequate population. Here, if anywhere, the Greeks should master their jealousy, and invite settlements, either of their own oppressed brethren in Turkey, or from other nations, that these waste plains should again be peopled, and the land bring forth her increase. The tide of emigration has flowed westward too long, and the day will come when the original homes of population must be re-peopled by their long-estranged offspring. Of these, Greece and Asia Minor are the nearest and the fairest.

The advance of science may yet explain to us the curious variations in fertility, not only of produce, but of population, which we find in the same country at different epochs. The most astonishing cases, such as that of Upper Asia, may arise from great changes of climate. But there are other countries, such as Italy and Greece, where the change of climate seems not very great,

and where, most certainly, the population became sterile too suddenly to admit of such an explanation. The Italy of Polybius is an astonishing picture to the traveller in the Italy of the present day, though many centuries, and even changes of race, have since intervened. But the Greece of Strabo and of Pausanias was already depopulated, at a time when no great change of climate could have occurred, and though this may depend upon still subsisting natural obstacles, yet they may also have long since vanished away. These are not inquiries for historians, but for naturalists, in the widest and most scientific sense.

So many splendid and thorough works have been written about modern Greece, and its antiquities, that it seems difficult to justify the publication of so small and insignificant a book as this, upon so great a subject. I can only urge the curious fact, that the constant repetition of the same thing in a new form seems necessary to stimulate public interest, which will not be kept alive by old books, however perfect, and however superior to their imitations. It is to me a cherished object to make English-speaking people intimate with the life of the old Greeks, and that

object will be promoted if this little book persuades even a few to study the monuments in Greece for themselves, or, at least, to turn to the splendid literature on the subject.

I must again apologise to all sensitive modern Greeks, if I have ventured to advise them about their mistakes. It is far too fashionable among us to insist upon the weak points of that struggling kingdom; nor does it receive even scant justice from the English newspaper press. The only really just picture of the nation which I have seen in modern books is that of Mr. Tuckerman in his 'Greeks of To-day.' But this is an American, not an English, estimate. I hope my readers will correct any bad impression produced in the following pages, by consulting his instructive and interesting volume.

The present crisis in the East will, in my opinion, have an unfortunate result, unless the boundaries of Greece are enlarged, and a greater scope for development provided for that intelligent and enterprising people. If their chief national fault be jealousy, let me repeat that this is always the vice of limited communities, and that there is no better way of curing people's jealousies than by enlarging their resources and their interests.

I have to thank my old pupil, Mr. R. J. POLDEN, for many valuable corrections of the proof sheets and Mr. A. S. MURRAY for information about the lion of Chæronea. My obligations to books are too many to be enumerated.

The illustrations were to some extent an after-thought, but will help to explain some of my criticisms on Greek art. Those representing the older and ruder stages (pp. 61–6) are of peculiar interest, and some of them not easily accessible to the student elsewhere. They will give him a clearer insight into the extraordinary advance of Pheidias, and his School, over their predecessors. The Attic tombs are not long discovered, and will be new to most of my readers. They are unfortunately much stained and defaced, and must be appreciated, as here given, rather for their feeling than for their execution. All the illustrations are taken from photographs obtained at Athens from Mr. CONSTANTINE, the obliging proprietor of the New York hotel, which I recommend to travellers.

SUTTON, *October 25th*, 1876.

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CORRIGENDA.

Page 11, line 14, *for* won *read even.*
„ 102, „ 11, *for* Petrarchus *read* Πέτραχος.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION—FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE COAST.

A VOYAGE to Greece does not at first sight seem a great undertaking. We all go to and fro to Italy as we used to go to France. A trip to Rome, or even to Naples, is now an Easter holiday affair. And is not Greece very close to Italy on the map? What signifies the narrow sea that divides them? This is what a man might say who only considered geography, and did not regard the teaching of history. For the student of history cannot look upon these two peninsulas without being struck with the fact that they are, historically speaking, turned back to back; that while the face of Italy is turned westward, and looks towards France and Spain, and across to us, the face of Greece looks eastward, towards Asia Minor and towards Egypt. Every great city in Italy, except Venice, approaches or borders the Western Sea—Genoa, Pisa, Florence, Rome, Naples.

All the older history of Rome, its development, its glories, lie on the west of the Appenines. When you cross them you come to what is called the back

of Italy; and you feel in that dull country, and that straight coast line, you are separated from the beauty and charm of real Italy. Contrariwise, in Greece, the whole weight and dignity of its history gravitate towards the eastern coast. All its great cities—Athens, Thebes, Corinth, Argos, Sparta—are on that side. Their nearest neighbours were the coast cities of Asia Minor and of the Cyclades, but the western coasts were to them harbourless and strange. If you pass Cape Málea, they said, then forget your home.

So it happens that the coasts of Italy and Greece, which look so near, are out-lying and out-of-the-way parts of the countries to which they belong; and if you want to go straight from real Italy to real Greece, the longest way is that from Brindisi to Corfu, for you must still journey from Naples to Brindisi, and from Corfu to Athens. The shortest way is to take ship at Naples, and to be carried round Italy and round Greece from the centres of culture on the west of Italy to the centres of culture (such as they are) on the east of Greece. But this is no trifling passage. When the ship has left the coasts of Calabria, and steers into the open sea, you feel that you have at last left the west of Europe, and are setting sail for the Eastern Seas. And I may anticipate for a moment here, and say that even now the face of Athens is turned, as of old, to the East. Her trade and her communications are through the Levant. Her intercourse is with Con-

stantinople and Smyrna, and Syra, and Alexandria, to which a man may sail almost any day in the week. You can only sail to Italy—I had almost said to Europe—on Saturdays, and upon an occasional Thursday.

This curious parallel between ancient and modern geographical attitudes in Greece is, no doubt, greatly due to the now by-gone Turkish rule. In addition to other contrasts, Mohammedan rule and Eastern jealousy—long unknown in Western Europe—first jarred upon the traveller when he touched the coasts of Greece; and this dependency was once really part of a great Asiatic Empire, where all the interests and communications gravitated eastward, and away from the Christian and better civilized West. The revolution which expelled the Turks was unable to root out the ideas which their subjects had learned; and so, in spite of Greek hatred of the Turk, his influence still lives through Greece in a thousand ways.

For many hours after the coasts of Calabria had faded into the night, and even after the snowy dome of Etna was lost to view, our ship sailed through the open sea, with no land in sight; but we were told that early in the morning, at the very break of dawn, the coasts of Greece would be visible. So, while others slept, I started up at half-past three in the morning, eager to get the earliest possible sight of the land which still occupies so large a place in our thoughts. It was a soft grey morning; the sky was covered with light broken clouds, and the deck

was wet with a passing shower, of which the last drops were still flying in the air; and before us, some ten miles away, the coasts and promontories of the Peloponnesus were reaching southward into the quiet sea. These long serrated ridges did not look lofty, in spite of their snow-clad peaks, nor did they look inhospitable, in spite of their rough outline, but were all toned in harmonious colour—a deep purple blue, with here and there, on the far Arcadian peaks, and on the ridge of Mount Taygetus, patches of pure snow. In contrast to the large sweeps of the Italian coast, its open seas, its long waves of mountain, all was here broken, and rugged, and varied. The sea was studded with rocky islands, and the land indented with deep, narrow bays. I can never forget the strong and peculiar impression of that first sight of Greece; nor can I cease to wonder at the strange likeness which rose in my mind, and which made me think of the bays and rocky coasts of the west and south-west of Ireland. There was the same cloudy, showery sky, which is so common there; there was the same serrated outline of hills, the same richness in promontories, and rocky islands, and land-locked bays. Nowhere have I seen a like purple colour, except in the wilds of Kerry and Connemara; and though the general height of the Greek mountains, as the snow in May testified, was far greater than that of the Irish hills, yet on that morning, and in that light, they looked low and homely, not displaying their grandeur, or

commanding awe and wonder, but rather attracting the sight by their wonderful grace, and by their variety and richness of outline and colour. I stood there, I know not how long—for I was alone, and could stand without guide or map—telling myself the name of each mountain and promontory, and so filling out the idle names and outlines of many books with the fresh reality itself. There was the west coast of Elis, as far north as the eye could reach, the least interesting part of the view, as it was of the history, of Greece; then the richer and more varied outline of Messene, with its bay, thrice famous at great intervals, and then for long ages feeding idly on that fame; Pylos, Sphacteria, Navarino—each of them a foremost name in Hellenic history. Above the bay could be seen those rich slopes which the Spartans coveted of old, and which, as I saw them, were covered with golden corn. The three headlands which give to the Peloponnesus its plane-leaf form, as Strabo observed,[1] were as yet lying parallel before us, and their outline confused; but the great crowd of heights and intersecting chains, which told at once the Alpine character of the peninsula, called to mind the other remark of the geographer, who calls it the Acropolis of Greece. The words of old Herodotus, too, rise in the mind with new reality, when he talks of the poor and stony soil of the country as a 'rugged nurse of liberty.'

[1] VIII. c. 2. *ἔστι τοίνυν ἡ Πελοπόννησος ἐοικυῖα φύλλῳ πλατάνου τὸ σχῆμα.*

For the nearer the ship approaches, the more this feature comes out; increased, no doubt, greatly in our time by depopulation and general decay, when many arable tracts are lying desolate, but still at all times necessary, when a large proportion of the country consists of rocky peaks and precipices, where a goat may graze, but where the eagle builds secure from the hand of man. The coast, once teeming with traffic, is now lonely and deserted. A single sail in the large gulf of Koron, and a few miserable huts, discernible with a telescope, only added to the feeling of solitude. It was, indeed, 'Greece, but living Greece no more.' Even the pirates, who sheltered in these creeks and mountains, have abandoned this region in which there is nothing now to plunder.

But as we crossed the mouth of the gulf, the eye caught with delight distant white houses along the high ground of the eastern side—in other words, along the mountain slopes which run out into the promontory of Tainaron; and a telescope soon brought them into distinctness, and gave us the first opportunity of discussing modern Greek life. We stood off the coast of Maina—the home of those Mainotes whom Byron has made so famous as pirates, as heroes, as lovers, as murderers; and even now, when the stirring days of war and of piracy have passed away, the whole district retains the aspect of a country in a state of siege or of perpetual danger. Instead of villages surrounded

by peaceful homesteads, each Mainote house, though standing alone, was walled in, and in the centre was a high square tower, in which, according to trustworthy travellers, the Mainote men used to spend their day watching their enemies, while the women and children alone ventured out to till the fields. For these fierce mountaineers were not only perpetually defying the Turkish power, which was never able to subdue them thoroughly, but they were all engaged at home with internecine feuds, of which the origin was often forgotten, but of which the consequences remained in the form of vengeance due for the life of a kinsman. When this was exacted on one side, the obligation changed to the other; and so for generation after generation they spent their lives in either seeking or avoiding vengeance. This more than Corsican *vendetta* was, by a sort of mediæval chivalry, not extended to the women and children, who were thus in perfect safety, while their husbands and fathers were in daily and deadly danger.

They are considered the purest in blood of all the Greeks, though it does not appear that their dialect approaches old Greek nearer than those of their neighbours; but for beauty of person, and independence of spirit, they certainly rank first among the inhabitants of the Peloponnesus, and most certainly they must have among them a good deal of the old Messenian blood. Most of the country is barren, but there are orange woods,

which yield the most delicious fruit—a fruit so large and rich that it makes all other oranges appear small and tasteless. The country is now perfectly safe for visitors, and the people extremely hospitable, though their diet is not very palatable to the northern traveller.

So with talk and anecdote about the Mainotes—for everyone was now up on deck and sight-seeing—we neared the classic headland of Tainaron, almost the southern point of Europe, once the site of a great temple of Poseidon—not preserved to us, like its sister monument on Sunium—and once, too, the entry to the regions of the dead. And, as if to remind us of its most beautiful legend, the dolphins, which had befriended Arion of old, and carried him here to land, rose in the calm summer sea, and came playing round the ship, showing their quaint forms above the water, and keeping with our course, as it were an escort into the homely seas and islands of truer Greece. Strangely enough, in many other journeys through Greek waters, never again did we see these dolphins; and here, as elsewhere the old legend, I suppose, based itself upon the fact that this, of all their wide domain, was the favourite resting-place of these creatures, with which the poets of old felt so strong a sympathy.

But, while the dolphins have been occupying our attention, we have cleared Cape Matapan, and the deep Gulf of Asine and Gytheion—in fact, the Gulf of Sparta is open to our view. We strained

our eyes to discover the features of 'hollow Lacedæmon,' and to take in all the outline of this famous bay, through which so many Spartans had held their course in the days of their greatness. The site of Sparta is far from the sea, probably twelve or fifteen miles, but the place is marked for every spectator, throughout all the Peloponnesus and its coasts, by the jagged top of Mount Taygetus, even still in June covered with snow. Through the forests upon its slopes the young Spartans and their famous Laconian hounds would hunt all day, and after their rude supper beguile the evening with stories of their dangers and their success. But, as might be expected, of the five villages which made up the famous city, not a stone or vestige remains. The old port of Gythium is still a port; but here, too, the 'wet ways,' and that sea once covered with boats, which a Greek comic poet has called the 'ants of the sea,' have been deserted.

We were a motley company on board—Russians, Greeks, Turks, French, English; and it was not hard to find pleasant companions and diverting conversation among them all. I turned to a Turkish gentleman, who spoke French indifferently, and used *chose* for every name or word where his knowledge failed him: 'Is it not,' said I, 'a great pity to see this fair coast so desolate?' 'A great pity, indeed,' said he, 'but what can you expect from these Greeks? They are all pirates and robbers

they are all liars and knaves. Had the Turks been allowed to hold possession of the country, they would have improved it, and developed its resources; but since the Greeks became independent, everything has gone to ruin. Roads are broken up, communications abandoned; the people emigrate and disappear—in fact, nothing prospers.'

Presently, I got beside a Greek gentleman, from whom I was anxiously picking up the first necessary phrases and politenesses of modern Greek, and, by way of amusement, put to him the same question. I got the answer I expected. 'Ah!' said he, 'the Turks, the Turks! When I think how these miscreants have ruined our beautiful country! How could a land thrive or prosper under such odious tyranny?' I ventured to suggest that the Turks were now gone five and forty years, and that it was high time to see some fruits of recovered liberty in the Greeks. No, it was impossible. The Turks had cut down all the woods, and so ruined the climate; they had destroyed the cities, broken up the roads, encouraged the bandits—in, fact they had left the country in such a state that centuries would not cure it.

How far both were right, or both wrong, is not a question for me to decide; but it might have been suggested, had we been so disposed, that the greatest and the most hopeless of all these sorrows—the utter depopulation of the country—is not due to either modern Greeks or Turks, nor even to the

slave hordes of the Middle Ages. It was a calamity which came upon Greece almost suddenly, immediately after the loss of her independence, and which the historians and physiologists have as yet been only partially able to explain. Of this very coast, upon which we were then gazing, the geographer Strabo, about the time of Christ, says, 'that of old, Lacedæmon had numbered 100 cities; in his day there were but ten remaining.' So, then, the sum of the crimes of both Greeks and Turks may be diminished by one. But I, perceiving that each of them would have been extremely indignant at this historical palliation of the other's guilt, 'kept silence, won from good words.'

These dialogues beguiled us till we found ourselves, almost suddenly, facing the promontory of Malea, with the island of Cythera (Cerigo) on our right. The island is one little celebrated in history. The Phœnicians seem, in very old times, to have had a settlement there for the working of their purple shell fishery, for which the coasts of Laconia were celebrated; and they doubtless founded there the worship of the Sidonian goddess, who was transformed by the Greeks into Aphrodite (Venus). During the Peloponnesian War we hear of the Athenians using it as a station for their fleet, when they were ravaging the adjacent coasts. It was, in fact, used by their naval power as the same sort of blister (ἐπιτείχισις) on Sparta that Dekeleia was when occupied by the Spartans in Attica.

Cape Malea is more famous. It was in olden days the limit of the homely Greek waters, the bar to all fair weather and regular winds—a place of storms and wrecks, and the portal to an inhospitable open sea. 'Pass Malea,' said the Greek sailor, 'and forget your home;' and we can well imagine the delight of the adventurous trader who had dared to cross the Western Seas, to gather silver and lead in the mines of Spain, when he rounded the dreaded cape, homeward bound in his heavy-laden ship, and looked back from the quiet Ægean. The barren and rocky Cape has its new feature now. On the very extremity there is a little platform, at some elevation over the water, and only accessible with great difficulty from the land by a steep goat-path. Here a hermit has built himself a tiny hut, cultivates his little plot of corn, and lives out in the lone seas, with no society but stray passing ships. When Greece was thickly peopled, he might well have been compelled to seek loneliness here; but now, when in almost any mountain chain he could find solitude and desolation enough, it seems as if that poetic instinct which so often guides the ignorant and unconscious anchorite had sent him to this spot, which combines, in a strange way, solitude and publicity, and which excites the curiosity, but forbids the intrusion, of every careless passenger to the East.

So we passed into the Ægean, the real thoroughfare of the Greeks, the mainstay of their communi-

cation—a sea, and yet not a sea, but the frame of countless headlands and islands, which are ever in view to give confidence to the sailor in the smallest boat. The most striking feature in our view was the serrated outline of the mountains of Crete, far away to the S. E. Though the day was grey and cloudy, the atmosphere was perfectly clear, and allowed us to see these very distant Alps, on which the snow still lay in great fields. The great chain of Ida brought back to us the old legends of Minos and his island kingdom, nor could any safer seat of empire be imagined for a power coming from the south than this great long bar of mountains, to which half the islands of the Ægean could pass a fire signal in times of war or piracy. The legends preserved to us of Minos—the human sacrifices to the Minotaur—the hostility to Theseus—the identification of Ariadne with the legends of Bacchus, so eastern and orgiastic in character—make us feel, with a sort of instinctive certainty, that, in spite of the opinions of learned Germans, the power of Minos was no Hellenic empire, but a Phœnician outpost, from which, as afterwards from Carthage, they commanded distant coasts and islands, for the purposes of trade. They settled, as we know, at Corinth, at Thebes, and probably at Athens, in the days of their greatness, but they seem always to have been strangers and sojourners there, while in Crete they kept the stronghold of their power. Thucydides thinks that Minos' main object was to put down

piracy, and protect commerce; and this is probably the case, though we are without evidence on the point. The historian evidently regards this old Cretan empire as the older model of the Athenian, but settled in a far more advantageous place, and not liable to the dangers which proved the ruin of Athens.

The nearer islands were small, and of no reputation, but each, like a mountain top reaching out of a submerged valley, stony and bare. Melos was farther off, but quite distinct—the old scene of Athenian violence and cruelty, to Thucydides so impressive, that he dramatises the incidents, and passes from cold narrative and set oration to a dialogue between the oppressors and the oppressed. Melian starvation was long after proverbial among the Greeks, and there the fashionable and aristocratic Alcibiades applied the arguments, and carried out the very policy which the tanner Cleon could not propose without being pilloried by the great historian whom he made his foe. This and other islands, which were always looked upon by the mainland Greeks with some contempt, have of late days received special attention from archæologists. It is said that the present remains of the old Greek type are now to be found among the islanders—an observation which I did not find true, but which I cannot deny, for want of fuller investigation. The noblest and most perfect type of Greek beauty has, indeed, come to us from Melos,

but not in real life. It is the celebrated Venus of Melos—the most pure and perfect image we know of that goddess, and one which puts to shame the lower ideals so much admired in the museums of Italy.

Another remark should be made in justice to the islands, that the groups of Therasia and Santorin, which lie round the crater of a great extinct volcano, have supplied us with far the oldest vestiges of inhabitants in any part of Greece. In these, beneath the lava slopes formed in the last great eruption—an eruption earlier than any history, except, perhaps, Egyptian—have been found the dwellings, the implements, and the bones of men, who cannot have lived there much later than 2000 B. C. The art, as well as the implements, of these old dwellers in their Stone Age, has shown us how very ancient Greek forms, and even Greek decorations, are in the world's history: and we may yet from them and from farther researches, such as Schliemann's, be able to reconstruct the state of things in Greece before the Greeks came from their Eastern homes. The special reason why these inquiries seem to me likely to lead to good result is this, that what is called neo-barbarism is less likely to mislead us here than elsewhere. Neo-barbarism means the occurrence in later times of the manners and customs which generally mark very old and primitive times. Some few things of this kind survive everywhere; thus, in the Irish Island of Arran, a group of famous *savants* mistook a stone

donkey-shed of two years' standing for the building of an extinct race in grey antiquity. As a matter of fact, the construction had not changed from the oldest type. But the spread of culture, and the fulness of population in the good days of Greece, make it certain that every spot about the thoroughfares was improved and civilized; and so, as I have said, there is less chance here than anywhere of our being deceived into mistaking rudeness for oldness, and raising a modern savage to the dignity of a primæval man.

But we must not let speculations spoil our observations, and must not waste the precious moments given us to take in once for all the general outline of the Greek coasts. While the long string of islands, from Melos up to the point of Attica, framed in our view to the right, to the left the great bay of Argolis opened far into the land, making a sort of vistá into the Peloponnesus, so that the mountains of Arcadia could be seen far to the west standing out against the setting sun; for the day was now clearer—the clouds began to break, and let us feel touches of the sun's heat towards evening. As we passed Hydrea, the night began to close about us, and we were obliged to make out the rest of our geography by the aid of a rich full moon.

But these Attic waters, if I may so call them, will be mentioned again and again in the course of our voyage, and need not now be described in detail.

The reader will, I think, get the clearest notion of the size of Greece by reflecting upon the time required to sail round the Peloponnesus in a good steamer. The ship in which we made the journey—the *Donnai*, of the French Messagerie Company,—made about eight miles an hour, as I ascertained from frequently questioning the officers. Coming within close range of the coast of Messene, about five o'clock in the morning, we rounded all the headlands, and arrived at the Peiræus about eleven o'clock the same night. So, then, the Peloponnesus is a small peninsula, but even to an outside view 'very large for its size;' for the actual climbing up and down of constant mountains, in any land journey from place to place, makes the distance in miles very much greater than the line as the crow flies. If I said that every ordinary distance, as measured on the map, is doubled in the journey, I believe I should be under the mark.

One more reflection, and that a bold one, here suggests itself. If England, instead of being content with Malta and the Ionian Islands, had, in the days of her naval greatness and general reputation, obtained Sicily and Southern Greece, what precious results might have been gained for these countries themselves, and for Europe at large! While our invalids and sybarites would have spread wealth and refinement through the beautiful uplands of Sicily, our route to India would

have lain through Greece, and years ago every curious traveller might have gone by rail to Athens, as he now goes to Brindisi. Greek art and antiquities would have become the household property of good society, instead of being seen only by a few privileged people, to the great disgust of their envious neighbours.

I will add a word upon the form and scope of the following work. It seeks to bring the living features of Greece home to the student, by connecting them, as far as possible, with the facts of older history, which are so familiar to most of us. It will also say a good deal about the modern politics of Greece, and the character of the modern population. A long and careful survey of the extant literature of ancient Greece has convinced me that the pictures usually drawn of the old Greeks are idealised, and that the real people were of a very different, if you please of a much lower, type. What is very remarkable and worth quoting in confirmation of my judgment is this, that intelligent people at Athens, who had read my opinions formerly hazarded upon the subject, were so struck with the close resemblance of my pictures of the old Greeks to the present inhabitants that they concluded I must have visited the country before writing these opinions, and that I was, in fact, drawing the classical people from the life of the moderns. If this is not a proof of the justice of these views, it at least strongly suggests that they

may be true, and is a powerful support in arguing the matter on the perfectly independent ground of the inferences from old literature. After all, national characteristics are very permanent, and very hard to be shaken off, and it would seem strange, indeed, if both these and the Greek language should have remained almost intact, and yet the race have either changed or been saturated with foreign blood. Foreign invasions and foreign conquests of Greece were common enough; but here, as elsewhere, the climate and circumstances which have formed a race seem to conspire to preserve it, and to absorb foreign types and features, rather than to permit the extinction or total change of a distinct race.

I feel much fortified in my judgment of Greek character by finding that a very smart, though too sarcastic, observer, M. E. About, in his well-known *Grèce contemporaine*, estimates the people very nearly as I am disposed to estimate the commoner ancient Greeks. He notices, in the second and succeeding chapters of his book, a series of features which make this nationality a very distinct one in Europe. Starting from the question of national beauty, and holding rightly that the beauty of the men is greater than that of the women, he touches on a point which told very deeply upon all the history of Greek art. At the present day, the Greek men are much more particular about their appearance, and more vain of it, than the women. The most striking beauty

among them is that of young men; and as to the care of figure, as About well observes, in Greece it is the men who wear stays—a fashion unknown among Greek women. You may see any day at Athens a dandy so pinched in the waist as to remind one of the *Wasps* of Aristophanes. Along with this handsome appearance, the people are, doubtless, a very temperate people; although they make a great deal of strong wine, they never drink much, and are far more critical about good water than wine. Indeed, in so warm a climate, wine is disagreeable even to the northern traveller; and, as Herodotus remarked long ago, very likely to produce insanity, the rarest form of disease among the Greeks. In fact, they are not a passionate race—having at all ages been gifted with a very bright intellect, and a great reasonableness; a love of intellectual insight into things, which is inconsistent with the storms of wilder passion.

They are, probably, as clever a people as can be found in the world, and fit for any mental work whatever. This they have proved, not only by getting into their hands all the trade of the Eastern Mediterranean, but by holding their own perfectly among English merchants in England. As yet they have not found any encouragement in other directions; but there can be no doubt that they, if settled among a great people, and weaned from the follies and jealousies of Greek politics, would (like the Jews) outrun many of us, both in politics and in

science. However that may be—and perhaps such a development requires moral qualities in which they seem deficient—it is certain that their workmen learn trades with extraordinary quickness; and their young commercial or professional men learn languages, and the amount of knowledge necessary to make money, with the most singular aptness. But as yet they are stimulated chiefly by the love of gain.

Besides this, they have great national vanity, and, as M. About remarks, we need never despair of a people who have intelligence, and are at the same time vain. They are very fond of displaying their knowledge on all points—especially I noted their pride in shewing off their knowledge of old Greek history and legend. When I asked them whether they believed the old mythical stories they repeated, they seemed afraid of being thought simple if they confessed they did, and afraid of the reputation of their ancestors if they declared they did not. So they used to preserve a discreet neutrality.

The instinct of liberty appears to me as strong in the nation now as it ever was. In fact, the people have never been really enslaved. The eternal refuge for liberty afforded by the sea and the mountains has saved them from this fate; and, even beneath the heavy yoke of the Turks, a large part of the nation was not subdued, but, under the profession of bandits and pirates, enjoyed the great privilege for

which their ancestors had contended so earnestly. The Mainotes, for example, of whom I have just spoken as occupying the coasts of Messene, never tolerated any resident Turkish magistrate among them, but 'handed to a trembling tax-collector a little purse of gold pieces, hung on the end of a naked sword.'[1] Now, the whole nation is more intensely and thoroughly democratic than any other in Europe. They acknowledge no nobility save that of descent from the chiefs who fought in the war of liberation; they will allow no distinction of classes; every common mule-boy is a gentleman (κύριος), and fully your equal. He sits in the room at meals, and joins in the conversation at dinner. The only reason they tolerate a king is because they cannot endure one of themselves to be superior. This jealousy is, unfortunately, a mainspring of Greek politics, and when combined with a dislike of agriculture, as a stupid and unintellectual occupation, fills all the country with politicians, merchants, and journalists. But they want the spirit of subordination of their great ancestors, and are often accused of lack of honesty—a very grave feature, and the greatest obstacle to progress in all ages. But it is better to let points of character come out gradually in the course of our studies than to bring them together into an official portrait. It is impossible to wander through the country without seeing and understanding the inhabitants; for the travel-

[1] The words are M. About's.

ler is in constant contact with them, and they have no scruple in displaying all their character.

M. About has earned the profound hatred and contempt of the nation by his picture, and I do not wonder at it, seeing that the tone in which he writes is flippant and ill-natured, and seems to betoken certain private animosities, of which the Greeks tell numerous anecdotes.

I have no such excuse to be severe or ill-natured, as I found nothing but kindness and hospitality everywhere, and sincerely hope my free judgments may not hurt some sensitive Greek who may chance to see them. Even the great Finlay—one of their best friends—is constantly censured by them for his writings about Modern Greece.

But, surely, any real lover of Greece must feel that plain speaking about the faults of the nation is much wanted. The worship lavished upon them by Byron and his school has done its good, and can now only do harm.

CHAPTER II.

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF ATHENS AND ATTICA.

THERE is probably no more exciting voyage, to any educated man, than the approach to Athens from the sea. Every promontory, every island, every bay, has its history. If he knows the map of Greece properly, he needs no guide-book or guide to distract him; if he does not, he needs little Greek to ask of anyone near him the name of this or that object; and the mere names are sufficient to stir up all his classical recollections. But he must make up his mind not to be shocked at *Ægĭna* or *Phalĕrum*, and even to be told that he is utterly wrong in his way of pronouncing them.

It was our fortune to come into Greece by night, with a splendid moon shining upon the summer sea. The varied outlines of Sunium, on the one side, and Ægina on the other, were very clear, but in the deep shadows there was mystery enough to feed the burning impatience of seeing all in the light of common day; and though we had passed Ægina, and had come over against the rocky Salamis, as yet there was no sign of Peiræus. Then

came the light on Psyttaleia, and they told us that the harbour was right opposite. Yet we came nearer and nearer, and no harbour could be seen. The barren rocks of the coast seemed to form one unbroken line, and nowhere was there a sign of indentation or of break in the outline. But, suddenly, as we turned from gazing on Psyttaleia, where the flower of the Persian nobles had once stood in despair, looking upon their fate gathering about them, the vessel had turned eastward, and discovered to us the crowded lights and thronging ships of the famous harbour. Small it looked, very small, but evidently deep to the water's edge, for great ships seemed touching the shore; and so narrow is the mouth, that we almost wondered how they had made their entrance in safety. But we saw it some weeks later, with nine men-of-war towering above all its merchant shipping and its steamers, and among them all crowds of ferry-boats were skimming about in the breeze with their wing-like sails. Then we found out that, like the rest of Greece, the Peiræus was far larger than it looked.

It differed little, alas! from more vulgar harbours in the noise and confusion of disembarking; in the absurdity of its custom-house; in the extortion and insolence of its boatmen. It is still, as in Plato's day, 'the haunt of sailors, where good manners are unknown.' But when we had escaped the turmoil, and were seated silently on the way to Athens, almost along the very road of classical

days, all our classical notions, which had been scared away by vulgar bargaining and protesting, regained their sway. We had sailed in through the narrow passage where almost every great Greek that ever lived had sometime passed; now we went along the line, hardly less certain, which had seen all these great ones going to and fro between the city and the port. The present road is shady, and the moon had set, so that our approach to Athens was even more mysterious than our approach to the Peiræus. We were, moreover, perplexed at our carriage stopping under some great plane trees, though we had driven but two miles, and the night was far spent. Our coachman would listen to no advice or persuasion. We learned afterwards that every carriage going to and from Peiræus stops at this half-way house, that the horses may drink, and the coachman take 'Turkish delight,' and water. There is no exception made to this custom, and the traveller is bound to submit. At last we entered the unpretending ill-built streets at the west of Athens.

The stillness of the night is a phenomenon hardly known in that city. No sooner have men and horses gone to rest than all the dogs and cats of the town come out to bark and yell through the thoroughfares. Athens, like all parts of Modern Greece, abounds in dogs. You cannot pass a sailing boat in the Levant without seeing a dog looking angrily over the taffrail, and barking at you as you pass.

Every ship in the Peiræus has at least one, often a great many, on board. I suppose every house in Athens is provided with one. These creatures seem to make it their business to prevent silence and rest all the night long. They were ably seconded by the cats, as well as by an occasional wakeful donkey; and both cats and donkeys seemed to have voices of almost tropical violence.

So the night wore away under rapidly-growing adverse impressions. How is a man to admire art and revere antiquity if he is robbed of his repose? The Greeks sleep so much in the day that they seem indifferent about nightly disturbances; and, perhaps, after many years' habitude, even Athenian caterwauling may fail to rouse the sleeper. But what chance has the passing traveller? Even the strongest ejaculations are but a narrow outlet for his feelings.

In this state of mind, then, we rose at the break of dawn to see whether the window would afford any suggestion of ancient days to serve as a requital for angry sleeplessness. And there, right opposite, stood the rock which of all rocks in the world's history has done most for literature and art—the rock about which poets, and orators, and architects, and historians have ever spoken without exhausting themselves, which is ever new and ever old, ever fresh in its decay, ever perfect in its ruin, ever living in its death—the Acropolis of Athens.

When I saw my dream and longing of many years fulfilled, the first rays of the rising sun had just touched the heights, while the town below was still hid in gloom. And I saw rock, and rampart, and ruined fanes—all coloured in uniform tints; the lights were of a deep rich orange, and the shadows, of dark crimson, with the deeper lines of purple. There was no variety in colour between what nature and what man had set there. No whiteness shone from the marble, no smoothness showed upon the hewn and polished blocks; but the whole mass of orange and crimson stood out together into the pale, pure Attic air. There it stood, surrounded by lanes and hovels, still perpetuating the great old contrast in Greek history, of magnificence and meanness—of loftiness and lowness—as well in outer life as in inward motive. And, as it were in illustration of that art of which it was the most perfect bloom, and which lasted in perfection but a day of history, and then faded away, so I saw it again and again, in sunlight and in shade, in daylight and at night, but never again in its perfect and singular beauty.

If we except the Acropolis, there are only two striking remains of classical antiquity within the modern town of Athens—the Temple of Theseus and the few standing columns of Hadrian's great temple to Zeus. The latter is, indeed, very remarkable. The pillars stand on a vacant platform, once the site of the gigantic temple: the Acropolis

forms a noble background; away towards Phalerum stretch undulating hills which hide the sea; to the left (if we look from the town), Mount Hymettus raises its barren slopes; and in the valley, immediately below the pillars, flows the famous little Ilisus, glorified for ever by the poetry of Plato, and in its dried-out bed the fountain Callirrhoe, from which the Athenian maidens still draw water as of old—water the purest and best of the city. It wells out from under a great limestone rock, all plumed with the rich *Capillus Veneris*, which seems to find out and frame with its delicate green every natural spring in Greece. But the pillars of the Temple of Zeus, though very stately and massive, and with their summits bridged together by huge blocks of architrave, are still not Athenian, not Attic, not (if I may say so) genuine Greek work; for the Corinthian capitals, which are here seen perhaps in their greatest perfection, can hardly be called pure Greek taste. As is well known, they were hardly ever used, and never used prominently, till the Roman-Greek stage of art. The older Greeks seem to have had a fixed objection to intricate ornamentation in their larger temples. All the greater temples of Greece and Greek Italy are in the Doric Order, with its perfectly plain capital. They admitted groups of figures upon the pediment and metopes, because these groups formed clear and massive designs visible from a distance. But such intricacies as those of a Corinthian capi-

tal were not approved, except in small monuments, which were merely intended for close inspection, and where delicate ornament gave grace to a building which could not lay claim to grandeur. Such is clearly the case with the only purely Greek (as opposed to Græco-Roman) monument in the Corinthian Order, which we have been able to find—the Choragic monument of Lysicrates at Athens.[1] It was also the case with that beautiful little temple, or group of temples, known as the Erechtheum, which, standing beside the great massive Parthenon on the Acropolis of Athens, presents the very contrast upon which I am insisting. It is small and essentially graceful, being built in the Ionic style, with rich ornamentation; while the Parthenon is massive, and in spite of much ornamentation, very severe in its plainer Doric style.

But to return to the pillars of Hadrian's Temple. They are about fifty-five feet high, by six and a-half feet in diameter, and no Corinthian pillar of this colossal size would ever have been set up by the Greeks in their better days. So, then, in spite of the grandeur of these isolated remains—a grandeur not destroyed, perhaps even not diminished, by

[1] This beautiful monument has been so defaced and mutilated that the photographs of to-day give no idea of its decoration. The careful drawings and restorations of Stewart and Revett were made in the last century, when it was still comparatively intact, and it is through their book alone that we can now estimate the merits of many of the ancient buildings of Athens.

TEMPLE OF THESEUS (HERACLES?) AT ATHENS. P. 31.

coffee tables, and inquiring waiters, and military bands, and a vulgar crowd about their base—to the student of really Greek art they are not of the highest interest; nay, they even suggest to him what the Periclean Greeks would have done had they, with such resources, completed the great temple due to the munificence of the Roman Emperor.

Let us turn, then, in preference to the Temple of Theseus, at the opposite extremity of the town, it too standing upon a clear platform, and striking the traveller with its symmetry and its completeness, as he approaches from the Peiræus. It is in every way a contrast to the temple of which we have just spoken. It is very small—in fact so small in comparison with the Parthenon, or the great temple at Pæstum, that we are disappointed with it; and yet, being very old, it is built, not in the richly-decorated Ionic style of the Erechtheum, but in severe Doric; and though small and plain, it is very perfect—as perfect as any such relic that we have. It is many centuries older than Hadrian's great temple; it could have been destroyed with one-tenth of the trouble, and yet it still stands almost in its perfection. The reason is simply this. Few of the great classical temples suffered much till the Middle Ages. Now, in the Middle Ages this temple, as well as the Parthenon, was usurped by the Greek Church, and turned into a place of Christian worship. So, then, the little Temple of Theseus has escaped the ravages which the last

few centuries—worse than all that went before—have made in the remains of a noble antiquity. To those who desire to study the effect of the Doric Order this temple appears to me an admirable specimen. From its small size and clear position, all its points are very easily taken in. 'Such,' says Bishop Wordsworth, 'is the integrity of its structure, and the distinctness of its details, that it requires no description beyond that which a few glances might supply. Its beauty defies all: its solid, yet graceful form is, indeed, admirable; and the loveliness of its colouring is such that, from the rich mellow hue which the marble has now assumed, it looks as if it had been quarried, not from the bed of a rocky mountain, but from the golden light of an Athenian sunset.' And in like terms many others have spoken.

I have only one reservation to make. The Doric Order being essentially massive, it seems to me that this beautiful temple lacks one essential feature of that Order in which it is built, and therefore, after the first survey, after a single walk about it, it loses to the traveller who has seen Pæstum, and who presently cannot fail to see the Parthenon, that peculiar effect of massiveness—of almost Egyptian solidity—which is ever present, and ever imposing, in these huger Doric temples. It seems as if the Athenians themselves felt this—that they felt the plain simplicity of its style was not effective without size, and that they accordingly decorated this

structure with colours more richly than their other temples. All the reliefs and raised ornaments seem to have been painted: other decorations were added in colour on the flat surfaces, so that the whole temple must have been a mass of rich variegated hues, of which blue, green, and red are still distinguishable—or were in Stewart's time—and in which bronze and gilding certainly played an important part.

We are thus brought naturally face to face with one of the peculiarities of old Greek art most difficult to realize, and still more to appreciate. We can recognise in Egyptian and in Assyrian art the richness and appropriateness of much colouring. Modern painters are becoming so alive to this, that among the most striking pictures in our Royal Academy in London have been seen, for some years back, scenes from old Egyptian and Assyrian life, in which the rich colouring of the architecture has been quite a prominent feature, *e. g.*, Mr. Poynter's *Israel in Egypt*, and Mr. Long's *Babylonian Slave Market*. But in Greek art—in the perfect symmetry of the Greek temple, in the perfect grace of the Greek statue—we come to think form of such infinite and paramount importance that we look on the beautiful Parian and Pentelic marbles as specially suited and adapted for the expression of form apart from colour. There is even something in unity of tone that delights the modern eye. Thus, though we feel that the old Greek

temples have lost all their original brightness, yet, as I have myself said, and as I have quoted from Bishop Wordsworth, the rich mellow hue which has toned all these ruins has to us its peculiar charm. The same rich yellow brown, almost the colour of the Roman travertine, is one of the greatest features in the splendid remains which have made Pæstum unique in all Italy. This colour contrasts beautifully with the blue sky of southern Europe; it lights up with extraordinary richness in the rising or setting sun. We can easily conceive that were it proposed to restore the Attic temples to their pristine whiteness, we should feel a severe shock, and beg to have these venerable buildings left in the soberness of their acquired colour. Still more does it shock us to be told that great sculptors, with Parian marble at hand, preferred to set up images of the gods in gold and ivory, or, still worse, with parts of gold and ivory; and that they thought it right to fill out the eyes with precious stones, and affix gilded wreaths round coloured hair.

When we first come to realise these things, it is impossible not to exclaim against such a jumble, as we should call it, of painting and architecture—still worse, of painting and sculpture. Nor is it possible or reasonable that we should at once submit to such a revolution in our artistic ideas, and bow without criticism to these shocking features in Greek art. But if blind obedience to

these our great masters in the laws of beauty is not to be commended, so neither is an absolute resistance to all argument on the question to be respected; nor do I acknowledge the good sense or the good taste of that critic who insists that nothing can possibly equal the colour and texture of white marble, and that all colouring of such a substance is the mere remains of barbarism. For, say what we will, the Greeks were certainly, as a nation, the best judges of beauty whom the world has yet seen. And this is not all. The beauty of which they were evidently most fond was beauty of form—harmony of proportions, symmetry of design. They always hated the tawdry and the extravagant. As to their literature, there is no poetry, no oratory, no history, which is less decorated with the flowers of rhetoric: it is all pure in design, chaste in detail. So with their dress; so with their dwellings. We cannot but feel that, had the effect of painted temples and statues been tawdry, there is no people on earth who would have felt it so keenly, and disliked it so much. There must, then, have been strong reasons why this bright colouring did not strike their eye as it would the eye of sober moderns.

To anyone who has seen the country, and thought about the question there, many such reasons present themselves. In the first place, all through southern Europe, and more especially in Greece, there is an amount of bright colour in nature,

which prevents almost any artificial colouring from producing a startling effect. Where all the landscape, the sea, and the air are exceedingly bright, we find the inhabitants increasing the brightness of their dress and houses, as it were, to correspond with nature. Thus, in southern Italy, they paint their houses pink and yellow, and so give to their towns that rich and warm effect which we miss so keenly among the grey and sooty streets of northern Europe. So also in their dress, these people wear scarlet, and white, and rich blue, not so much in patterns as in large patches, and thus a festival in Sicily or in Greece fills the streets with intense colour. We know that the colouring of the old Greek dress was quite of the same character as that of the modern, though in design the dress of our day has completely changed. We must, therefore, imagine the old Greek crowd before their temples, or in their market-places, a very white crowd, with patches of scarlet, and various blue; perhaps altogether white in processions, if we except scarlet shoe-straps and other such slight relief. One cannot but feel that a richly coloured temple—that pillars of blue and red—that friezes of gilding, and other ornament, upon a white marble ground, and in white marble framing, must have been a splendid and appropriate background, a genial feature, in such a sky and with such costume. We must get accustomed to such combinations—we must dwell upon them in imagination, or ask our good painters

to restore them for us, and let us look upon them constantly and calmly. To me they appear far finer and richer than *our* attempts at ornament.

But I will not seek to persuade; I only desire to state the case fairly, and put the reader in a position to judge for himself. So much for the painted architecture. I will but add, the most remarkable specimen of a richly painted front to which we can now appeal is also really one of the most beautiful in Europe—I mean the front of S. Mark's at Venice. The rich frescoes and profuse gilding on this splendid front, of which photographs give a very false idea, should be studied by all who desire to judge fairly of this side of Greek taste.

But I must say a word, before passing on, concerning the statues. No doubt, the painting of statues, and the use of gold and ivory upon them, were derived from a rude age, when no images existed but rude wooden work—at first a mere block, then roughly altered and reduced to shape, but probably requiring some colouring to produce any effect whatever. To a public accustomed from childhood to such painted, and often richly-dressed, images, a pure white marble statue must appear utterly cold and lifeless. So it does to us, when we have become accustomed to the mellow tints of old and even weather-stained Greek statues; and it should here be noticed that this mellow skin-surface on antique statues is not

the mere result of age, but of an artificial process, whereby they burnt into the surface a composition of wax and oil, which gave a yellowish tone to the marble, as well as also that peculiar surface which so accurately represents the texture of the human skin. But if we imagine all the marble surfaces and reliefs in the temple coloured for architectural richness' sake, we can feel even more strongly how cold and out-of-place would be a perfectly colourless statue in the centre of all this pattern.

I will go farther and say that I have seen, and can point out cases, where colouring greatly heightens the effect and beauty of sculpture. The first is from the bronzes found at Herculaneum, now in the museum of Naples. Though they are not marble, they are suitable for my purpose, being naturally of a single dark-brown hue, which is indeed even more unfavourable (we should think) for such treatment. In some of the finest of these bronzes—especially in the two young men starting for a race—the eyeballs are inserted in white, with iris and pupil coloured. Nothing can be conceived more striking and life-like than the effect produced.

I will add one remarkable modern example—the monument at Florence to a young Indian prince, who visited England and this country five years ago, and died of fever during his homeward voyage. They have set up to him a richly coloured and gilded baldachin, in the open air, and in a

wooded, quiet park. Under this covering is a life-sized bust of the prince, in his richest state dress. The whole bust—the turban, the face, the drapery—all is coloured to the life, and the dress, of course, of the most gorgeous variety. The turban is chiefly white, striped with gold, in strong contrast to the mahogany complexion and raven hair of the actual head; then the robe is gold and green, and covered with ornament. The general effect is, from the very first moment, striking and beautiful. The longer it is studied, the better it appears, and I do not think there is a single reasonable spectator who will not confess that were we to replace the present bust with a copy of it in white marble, the beauty and harmony of the monument would be utterly marred. To those who have the opportunity of visiting Italy, I strongly commend these specimens of coloured buildings and sculpture. When they have seen them, they will hesitate to condemn what we have heard called the wretched bad taste of the old Greeks in their use of colour in the plastic arts.

But these archæological discussions are truly ἐκβολαὶ λόγου, digressions—in themselves necessary, yet only tolerable if they are not too long. I revert to the general state of the antiquities at Athens, always reserving the Acropolis for a special discussion. As I said, the isolated pillars of Hadrian's Temple to Zeus, and the so-called Temple

of Theseus, are the only very striking objects.[1] There are, of course, many other buildings, or remains of buildings. There is the monument of Lysicrates—a small and very graceful round chamber, adorned with Corinthian engaged pillars, and intended to carry on its summit the tripod he had gained in a musical and dramatic contest at Athens. There is the Temple of the Winds, as it is called—a sort of public clock, with sundials on its outward surfaces, and arrangements for a water-clock within. There are two portals, or gateways, one leading into the old agora, or market-place, the other leading from old Athens into the Athens of Hadrian.

But all these buildings are either miserably defaced, or of such late date and decayed taste as to make them unworthy specimens of pure Greek art. A single century ago there was much to be seen and admired which has since disappeared; and even to-day the majority of the population are

[1] By the way, the appellation Temple of Theseus is more than doubtful. The building fronts towards the east. This is proved by the greater size, and more elaborate decoration of the eastern portal. It is almost certain, according to an old scholion on Pindar, that the temples of heroes like Theseus faced west, while those of the Olympian Gods only faced the rising sun. The temple, therefore, was the temple, not of a hero, but of a God. Probably the Temple of Herakles, worshipped as a *God* at Athens, which is mentioned in the scholia of Aristophanes as situated in this part of Athens, is to be identified with the building in question. But I suppose for years to come we must be content to abide by the old name of Theseion, which is now too long in general use to be easily disturbed.

reckless as to the treatment of ancient monuments, and mischievous in wantonly defacing them. Thus, I saw the marble tombs of Otfried Müller and Charles Lenormant—tombs which, though modern, were yet erected at the cost of the nation to men who were eminent lovers and students of Greek art—I saw these tombs used as common targets by the neighbourhood, and all peppered with marks of shot and of bullets. I saw them, too, all but blown up by workmen blasting for building stones close beside them. I saw, also, from the Acropolis a young gentleman practising with a pistol at a piece of old carved marble work in the Theatre of Dionysus. His object seemed to be to chip off a piece from the edge at every shot. Happily, on this occasion, our vantage ground enabled us to take the law into our own hands, and after in vain appealing to a custodian to interfere, we adopted the tactics of Apollo at Delphi, and by detaching stones from the top of our precipice, we put to flight the wretched barbarian who had come to ravage the treasures of that most sacred place.

These instances will show what the state and security of Athenian monuments are at Athens. Even the Acropolis—which is guarded by old pensioners, who escort strangers during their stay, but who, as I have just said, will not interfere with their countrymen—even the Acropolis is only safe in times of peace, and is pretty sure to be bom-

barded in any serious revolution. This was done—and done in the presence of men whom I myself spoke with—some ten years after Lord Elgin had luckily carried off a good portion of its incomparable friezes to England. And yet now the Greeks are in the habit of calling him a fatal amateur, and of discussing the expediency of asking them back; they even hint at the bad taste of the English nation in not voluntarily sending them back. In other words, we are asked, or are going to be asked, or are expected without asking, to send back these priceless treasures to a people who have restored hardly anything up to the present day—who have not cared to put together the pieces of the broken lion of Chæronea, or to set up the fallen columns of the Parthenon, lying each in its place, and with their pieces in the natural order, since the year 1687. They are now learning to talk and fret about art and archæology; they have as yet done practically nothing to preserve or encourage them. I hope the day is far distant when an outbreak of chivalrous sentiment, such as that created by Lord Byron, will induce us to sacrifice what has been saved from certain destruction.[1]

[1] The usual apology or defence made by intelligent Greeks, when we press these things upon them, is their recent escape from Turkish rule. We received our country desolate, depopulated, impoverished, they say; everything must be begun afresh; there has been so much to be done, that we are not to blame. Give us time, and we will restore and make good all things. This defence, very complete at one time,

If the Greeks had money, or the English nation a real love of art, a nice question of national ownership connected with the Elgin marbles might possibly arise. As is well known, two of the ships which were bringing home Lord Elgin's marbles from Athens foundered as they were rounding Cape Malea, which thus in our own century (the year 1815) reasserted its classical reputation for dangerous storms. These precious relics have been lying at a depth of 90 feet ever since, and are now said by the Greeks to have been discovered—or rather their ships are said to have been discovered—by fishermen off the coast. If this be true, all the world ought to insist upon their recovery; for it is universally admitted that the sculptures of the Parthenon are the most perfect results of the most perfect age of the most perfect artists the world has yet seen. But supposing them recovered, to whom do they belong? Lord Elgin obtained them by a firman from the Sultan, who was then sovereign of Greece, and their acknowledged owner. But is the Greek government bound by the obligations of a sovereign

is becoming every day weaker. Now that some forty years of Greek liberty have elapsed, we may expect them to be up and doing. I will add this suggestion. If the Greeks would but abandon the perpetual fever of politics; if they would but resign themselves to any stable government for a few years; if the opposition would but support the government loyally in promoting national objects, the progress of the Greeks would be very different. It is, indeed, hard for any minister to attend to archæology, when his cabinet are always contending for bare existence against coalitions of opponents.

whom the nation has repudiated? Or even admitting that it is, does not the fact of their being left in Greek waters for sixty years give a lawful claim to the Greeks for retaining them? On the other hand, the accident of a shipwreck ought not to deprive Lord Elgin or his representatives (the British Museum?) of what was acknowledged their rightful property.

Unfortunately, this uncertainty will prevent any honest search from being made. The Greeks talk a great deal about it, and pretend great anxiety, but will do nothing; the English will probably not wish to spend money in recovering property which will at once be claimed by the Greeks, who will say that they were themselves on the point of taking possession of it. So the marbles must lie in the Mediterranean, I suppose, till some rich amateur quietly takes them up at his own expense, and probably without the knowledge of either government. I say all this on the supposition that they are really recoverable; but I need hardly add that this is very doubtful, indeed.

The melancholy fate of Parthenon sculptures, now doomed to perpetual separation—part of them still upon their rock; part of them among the dolphins about Cape Malea; part of them in the safe gloom of the British Museum; and yet a part of them, and that the greatest, destroyed not only by enemies, but by would-be patriots and conquerors—this melancholy fate naturally suggests to the

traveller in Greece the kindred one of the proper distribution of all antiquities, when found, in the best way to promote the love and knowledge of art.

On this point it seems to me that we have gone to one extreme, and the Greeks to the other, and that neither of us have done what is right and best to make known what we acknowledge ought to be known as widely as possible. The tendency, at least of later years, has been in England to swallow up all lesser and all private collections in the great national Museum in London, which has accordingly become so enormous and so bewildering that no one, I may boldly say, can profit by it except the trained specialist, who goes in with his eyes shut, and will not open them till he has arrived at the special class of objects he intends to examine. But to the ordinary public, and even the generally enlightened public (if such an expression be not a contradiction in terms), there is nothing so utterly bewildering, and therefore so unprofitable, as a visit to the myriad treasures of this great world of curiosities.

In the last century many private persons—many noblemen of wealth and culture—possessed remarkable collections of antiquities. These have almost all been swallowed up by what is called 'the nation.'

In Greece the very opposite course is being now pursued. By a special law it is forbidden

to sell out of the country, or even to remove from a district, any antiquities whatever; and for this purpose little museums have been established in every village in Greece—nay, sometimes, even in places where there is no village, in order that every district may possess its own riches, and become worth a visit from the traveller and the antiquarian. I have seen such museums at Eleusis, some fifteen miles from Athens, at Thebes, now an equally insignificant village, at Livadia, at Chæronea, at Argos, and even in the wild plains of Orchomenus, in a little chapel, without a town within miles of it. If I add to this that most of these museums were mere dark out-houses, only lighted through the door, the reader will have some notion of the task it would be to visit and criticise the ever-increasing remnants of classical Greece.

Here we have the opposite principle to that adopted in England, and we can hardly call it better. In Greece it is certainly worse. For though it is intended to give the country people an interest in their district antiquities, and also to induce learned travellers to traverse the country in quest of them, the Greek government has omitted to provide for the people any decent, well-lighted museums, any catalogues or descriptions of what is found, any proper reward for chance discoveries made by poor people. It has also omitted to provide for learned travellers—I will not say rail-

roads, but even ordinary roads, inns, beds, food, or, indeed, any kind of accommodation that could be named. You must ride on mules or ponies over a very rough country, often down the beds of streams, and up the sides of precipices; you must not expect to sleep in most beds for one moment after the darkness has invited the insect bandits—a far worse scourge than their human colleagues—to attack you. The traveller must depend altogether on private hospitality, which is, indeed, generally, and, so far as I know, generously proffered; but upon which independent people do not willingly count, and of which one can never be actually certain. However, then, the Greek plan might be adopted in such a country as England, provided our people were decently educated, in Greek desert plains and highlands it did not seem to me to answer its purpose, and remains an almost insuperable bar to any thorough study of the antiquities.

In such a town as Athens, on the contrary, it seems to me that the true solution of the problem has been attained, though it will probably be shortly abandoned for a central museum. There are at Athens at least four separate museums of antiquities—one at the University, one called the Vavarkion, one in the Theseion, and one on the Acropolis—devoted to its special treasures. If these several storehouses were thoroughly kept—if some obvious restorations of tips of noses and other ex-

tremities were made—I can conceive no better arrangement for studying separately and in detail the various monuments, which must always bewilder and fatigue when crowded together in one vast exhibition. If the British Museum were in this way severed into many branches, and the different classes of objects it contains were placed in separate buildings, and in different parts of London, I believe it would tend to a far greater knowledge of what it contains, and hence to a greater usefulness in educating the nation. To visit any one of the Athenian museums was a comparatively short and easy task, where a man can see the end of his labour before him, and hence will not hesitate to delay long over such things as are worth a careful study.

It may be said that all this digression about the mere placing of monuments is delaying the reader too long from what he desires to know—something about the monuments themselves. But this little book, to copy an expression of Herodotus, particularly affects digressions. I desire to wander through the subject exactly in the way which naturally suggests itself to me. After all, the reflections on a journey ought to be more valuable than its mere description.

Before passing into Attica, and leaving Athens, something more must, of course, be said of the museums, then of the newer diggings, and especially of the splendid tombs found in the Cera-

meicus. We will then mount the Acropolis, and wander about leisurely in its marvellous ruins. From it we can look out upon the general shape and disposition of Attica, and plan our shorter excursions.

CHAPTER III.

ATHENS—THE MUSEUMS—THE TOMBS.

NOTHING is more melancholy and more disappointing than the first view of the Athenian museums. Almost every traveller sees them after passing through Italy, where everything—where even too much—has been done to make the relics of antiquity perfect and complete. Missing noses, and arms, and feet have been restored; probable or possible names have been assigned to every statue; they are set up, generally, in handsome galleries, with suitable decoration; the visitor is provided with full descriptive catalogues. Nothing of all this however is found in Greece. The fragments are not sorted or arranged: many of the mutilated statues are lying prostrate, and of course in no way restored. Everything, I was told (June, 1875), was in process of being arranged. But there is room to apprehend that in fifty years things will still be found changing their places, and still in process of being arranged.[1] It is hard to believe in the

[1] There is an attempted Catalogue of the museums as they were in 1874, by Heydemann, in German. I tried this Catalogue in 1875, and

earnestness about art of any nation which has left the fallen pillars of the Parthenon upon the ground, not only since the explosion of 1687, but, what is more to the point, during nearly half a century of liberty, and of clear knowledge as to the value of these remains. So, then, except some foreign influences be brought to bear—except the French and German antiquaries act unselfishly at their own expense—I fear that all of us who visit Athens will be doomed to that first feeling of bitter disappointment.

But I am bound to add, that every patient observer who sets to work in spite of his disappointment, and examines with honest care these 'disjecta membra' of Attic art—anyone who will replace in imagination the tips of noses—anyone who will stoop over lying statues, and guess at the context of broken limbs—any such observer will find his vexation gradually changing into wonder, and will, at last, come to see that all the splendidly-restored Greek work in Italian museums is not worth a tithe of the shattered fragments in the real home and citadel of pure art. This is especially true of the museum on the Acropolis. It is, however, also true of the other museums, and more

found it quite useless. In very many cases he was obliged, just like the able editor of Murray's *Handbook*, to describe the fragments by their position in the building where they were placed. When I was there, both the buildings had been partly changed and the position of the antiquities altered.

obviously true of the reliefs upon the tombs. The assistance of an experienced Athenian antiquarian is also required, who knows his way among the fragments, and who can tell the history of the discovery, and the theories of the purport of each. There are a good many men of ability and learning connected with the University of Athens, who describe each object in the antiquarian papers according as it is discovered. But when I asked whether I could buy or subscribe to any recognised organ for such information, I was told (as I might have expected,) that no single paper or periodical was so recognised. Clashing interests and personal friendships determine *where* each discovery is to be announced; so that often the professedly archæological journals contain no mention of such things, while the common daily papers secure the information.

Here, again, we feel the want of some stronger government—some despotic assertion of a law of gravitation to a common centre—to counteract the strong, centrifugal forces acting all through Greek society. The old *autonomy* of the Greeks—that old assertion of local independence which was at once their greatness and their ruin—this strong instinct has lasted undiminished to the present day. They seem even now to hate pulling together, as we say. They seem always ready to assert their individual rights and claims against those of the community or the public. The old Greeks had as a safeguard their

divisions into little cities and territories; so that their passion for autonomy could be expended on their city interests, in which the individual could forget himself. But as the old Greeks were often too selfish for this, and asserted their personal autonomy against their own city, so the modern Greek, who has not this safety-valve, finds it difficult to rise to the height of acting in the interests of the nation at large; and though he converses much and brilliantly about Hellenic unity, generally allows personal interests to outweigh this splendid general conception.

So, then, the Greeks will not even agree to tell us where we may find a complete list of newly-discovered antiquities. Nor, indeed, does the Athenian public care very much, beyond a certain vague pride in them, for such things, if we except one peculiar kind, which has taken among them somewhat the place of old china among us. There have been found in many Greek cemeteries—in Megara, in Cyrene, and of late in great abundance and excellence at Tanagra, in Bœotia—little figures of terra cotta, often delicately modelled and richly coloured both in dress and limbs. These figurines are ordinarily from eight to twelve inches high, and represent ladies both sitting and standing in graceful attitudes, young men in pastoral life, and other such subjects. I was informed that some had been found in various places through Greece, but the main source of them—and a very rich source—is the

Necropolis at Tanagra. I saw several collections of these figures on cupboards, and in cabinets in private houses at Athens, and was greatly struck with the marvellous modernness of their appearance. The graceful drapery of the ladies especially was very like modern dress, and they had often on their heads flat round hats, quite similar in design to the gypsy hats much worn among us of late years. But above all, the hair was drawn back from the forehead, not at all in what is considered Greek style, but rather *à l'Eugénie*, as we used to say when we were young. Many hold in their hands large fans, like those which we make of peacocks' feathers. No reasonable theory has yet been started, so far as I know, concerning the object or intention of these figures. So many of them are female figures, that it seems unlikely they were portraits of the deceased; and the frequent occurrence of two figures together, especially one woman being carried by another, seems also to dissuade us from such a theory. They seem to be the figures called Κόραι by many old Greeks, which were used as toys by children, and, perhaps, as ornaments. The large class of tradesmen who made them were called Κορόπλαθοι, and were held in contempt by real sculptors. Many of them are, indeed, badly modelled, and evidently the work of ignorant tradesmen. If it could be shown that they were only found in the graves of children, it would be a touching sign of that world-wide feeling

among the human race, to bury with the dead friend whatever he loved and enjoyed in his life on earth, that he might not feel lonely in his gaunt and gloomy grave. But I do not fancy that this will ever be established.

There is an equal difficulty as to their age. The Greeks say that the tombs in which they are found are not later than the second century B.C., and it is, indeed, hard to conceive at what later period there was enough wealth and art in Tanagra to produce such elegant, and often costly, results. It and Thespiæ were, indeed, in Strabo's day (lib. ix. 2) the only remaining cities of Bœotia; the rest, he says, were but ruins and names. But we may be certain that in universal decay the remaining towns must have been as poor and insignificant as they now are. So, then, we seem necessarily thrown back into classical days for the origin of these figures, which in their bright colouring—pink and blue in the dresses, often gilded fringes; the hair always fair, so far as I could see—are, indeed, like what we know of old Greek statuary, but in other respects are, as I have just now said, surprisingly modern. If their antiquity can be strictly demonstrated, it will but show another case of the versatility of the Greeks in all things relating to art: how, with the simplest material, and at a long distance from the great art centres, they produced a type of exceeding grace and refinement totally foreign to their great old models,

varying in dress, attitude—every point of style—from ordinary Greek sculpture, and anticipating much of the modern ideals of beauty and elegance.

But it is necessary to suspend our judgment, and wait for farther and closer investigation. The workmen at Tanagra are now forbidden to sell these objects to private fanciers; and in consequence, their price has risen so enormously, that those in the market can never be obtained for less than from £40 to £80. At this price they can still be bought in Athens. The only other method of procuring them, and of procuring them more cheaply, is to undertake a personal voyage to Tanagra—a place now very out-of-the-way and difficult to reach—and there obtain from the workmen what they have concealed for the purpose of arranging private sales. This, I have no doubt, is the practical way to obtain them, whatever may be said of its morality. But antiquarian collectors have never been celebrated for extreme nicety of conscience. It is, therefore, worth while to notice the matter without venturing to offer any advice.

It is convenient to dispose of this peculiar and distinct kind of Greek antiquities, because it seems foreign to the rest, and cannot be brought under any general head. Doubtless, these figurines are now finding their way into most European museums.[1]

[1] There is now quite a large collection of them in the British Museum. See Vase Room I., case 35, where there are ten of these figures

I pass to the public collections at Athens, in which we find hardly any of these figures, and which rather contain the usual products of Greek plastic art—statues, reliefs, pottery, and inscriptions. As I have said, the statues are in the most lamentable condition, shattered into fragments, without any attempt at restoring even such losses as can be supplied with certainty. Thus, to take first those statues which belong to the highest and most perfect epoch, there are not, I suppose, more than eight or ten which look as if they could be restored into that perfection in which we see the *Apoxyomenos* or the *Mars* of the Vatican. What might be done by such wholesale restoration as was practised in Italy some fifty years ago it is hard to say. But even the ordinary observer can see that, without taking any liberties, some dozen figures—each of which is worth a thousand inferior works—could be rescued from oblivion.

There is, indeed, one—a naked athlete, with his cloak hanging over the left shoulder, and coiled round the left forearm—which seems as good as any strong male figure which we now possess. While it has almost exactly the same treatment of the cloak on the left arm which we see in the celebrated Hermes of the Vatican;[1] the proportions of the figure are

from Tanagra. In Room II. there is a whole case of them, chiefly from Cyrene, and from Cnidus.

[1] No. 53, Mus. Pio Clem., in a small room beside the *Apollo Belvidere* and *Laocoon*.

nearer the celebrated *Discobolus* (numbered 126, Braccio Nuovo). There are two other copies at Florence, and one at Naples. These repetitions point to some very celebrated original, which the critics consider to be of the older school of Polycletus, and even imagine may possibly be a copy of his *Doryphorus*, which was called the *Canon* statue, or model of the perfect manly form. The Hermes has too strong a likeness to Lysippus' *Apoxyomenos* not to be recognised as of the same school. What we have, then, in this splendid Attic statue is an intermediate stage between the earlier and stronger school of Polycletus and the elegant treatment of hair and cloak of the later school of Lysippus in Alexander's day.

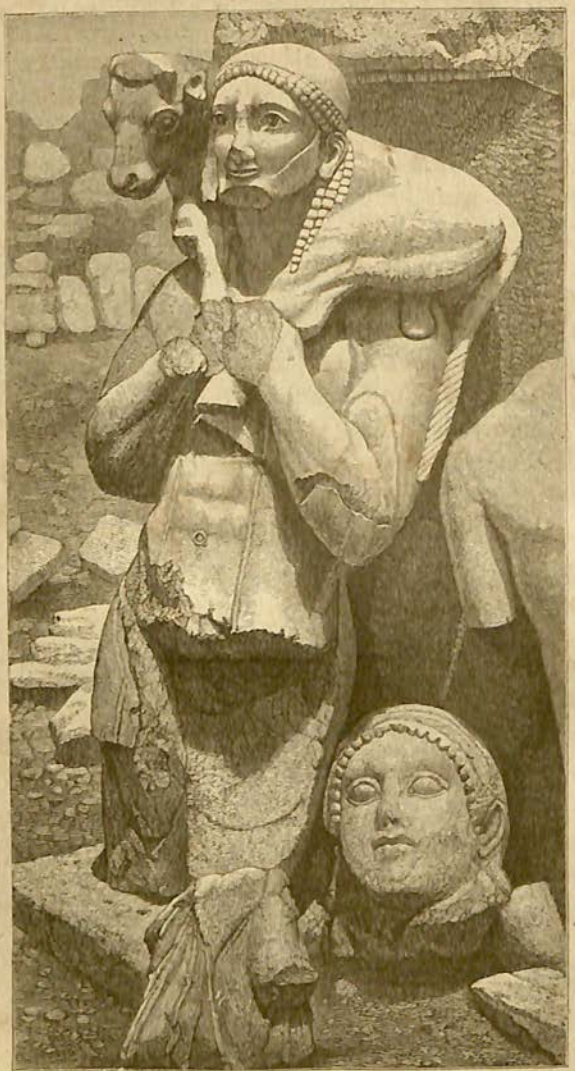
There can, however, be no doubt that it does not date from the older and severer age of sculpture, of which Phidias was the highest representative. Anyone who studies Greek art, even cursorily, perceives how remarkably not only the style of dress and ornament, but even the proportions of the figure change, as we come down from generation to generation in the long line of Greek sculptors. The friezes of Selinus (now at Palermo), and those of Ægina (now in Munich), which are our earliest certain specimens, are remarkable for short, thick-set forms. The men are men five feet seven, or, at most, eight inches high, and their figures are squat even for that height. In the specimens we have of the days of Phidias and Polycletus these

proportions are altered. The head of the *Doryphorus*, if we can depend upon our supposed copies, is still heavy, and the figure bulky, though taller in proportion. He looks a man of five feet ten inches at least. The statue we are just considering is even taller, and is like the copies we have of Lysippus' work, the figure apparently of a man of six feet high; but his head is not so small, nor is he so slender and light as this type is usually found.

It is not very easy to give a full account of this change. There is, of course, one general reason well known—the art of the Greeks, like almost all such developments, went through stiffness and clumsiness into solemn dignity and strength, to which it presently added that grace which raises strength into majesty. But in time the seeking after grace becomes too prominent, and so gradually strength, and with it, of course, the majesty which requires strength as well as grace, begins to fade away. So we arrive at a period when the forms are merely elegant or voluptuous, without any assertion of power.

This can only be made plain by a series of illustrations. Of course, the difficulty of obtaining really archaic statues is very great. They were mostly sacred images of the Gods, esteemed venerable and interesting by the Greeks, but seldom copied. Happily, the Romans, when they set themselves to admire and procure Greek statues, had fits

of what we now call pre-Raphaelitism—fits of admiration for the archaic and simple, even if ungraceful, in preference to the more perfect forms of later art. Hence, we find in Italy a number of statues which, if not really archaic, are at least *archaistic*, as the critics call it—imitations or copies of archaic statues. With these we must in general be content. I will speak of a similar development among female figures in connection with another subject, which will naturally suggest it. But we may pause a moment on the question of archaic Greek art, because, apart from the imitations of the time of Augustus and Hadrian, we have some really genuine fragments in the little museum in the Acropolis—fragments saved, not from the present Parthenon, but rather from about the ruins of the older Parthenon. This temple was destroyed by the Persians, and the materials were built into the surrounding wall of the Acropolis by the Athenians, when they began to strengthen and beautify it at the opening of their career of dominion and wealth. The stains of fire are said to be still visible on these drums of pillars now built into the fortification, and there can be no doubt as to the fact of their belonging to the old temple, as it is well attested. But I do not agree with the Germans that these older materials were so used, in order to nurse a perpetual hatred against the Persians in the minds of the people who saw daily before them the evidence of the ancient wrong done to their



THE MARATHONIAN THESEUS. P. 61.

temples.[1] I believe this sentimental twaddle to be quite foreign to all Greek feeling. The materials were used in the wall because they were unsuitable for the newer temples, and because they must otherwise be greatly in the way on the limited surface of the Acropolis.

The principal of the old sculptures as yet found is a very stiff, and, to us, comical figure, which has lost its legs, but is otherwise fairly preserved, and which depicts a male figure with curious conventional hair, and still more conventional beard, holding by its four legs a bull, which he is carrying on his shoulders. The eyes are now hollow, and were evidently once filled with something different from the marble of which the statue is made. The whole pose and style of the work is stiff and expressionless, and it is one of the few certain remains of the older Attic art still in existence.

To me there is little doubt what the statue means. It is the votive offering of the Marathonians, which Pausanias saw in the Acropolis, and which commemorated the legend of Theseus having driven the wild bull sent them by Minos from Marathon to the Acropolis, where he sacrificed it. Pausanias does not say how Theseus was represented with the

[1] It is asserted somewhere by a Greek author that the temples burned by the Persians were left in ruins to remind the people of the wrongs of the hated barbarians. But we have distinct evidence, in some cases, that this assertion is not true, and besides, using the materials for other purposes is not the same thing.

bull; but it was certainly not a group—such a thing is clearly beyond the narrow and timid conceptions of the artists of that day. It being impossible to represent man and bull together except by representing the man carrying the bull, the artist has made the animal full-grown in type, but as small as a calf, and has, of course, not attempted any expression of hostility between the two. This peaceful look, which merely arises from the inability of the artist to render expression, has led some good art critics to call it, not a Theseus but a Hermes. This identification rests on purely theoretical grounds. Such being the history of the statue, there remains but to look at it, if we wish to note its characteristics. We see the conventional treatment of the hair, the curious transparent garments lying close to the skin, and the very heavy muscular forms of the arms and body. The whole figure is stiff and expressionless, and strictly in what is called the hieratic or old religious style, as opposed to an ideal or artistic form.

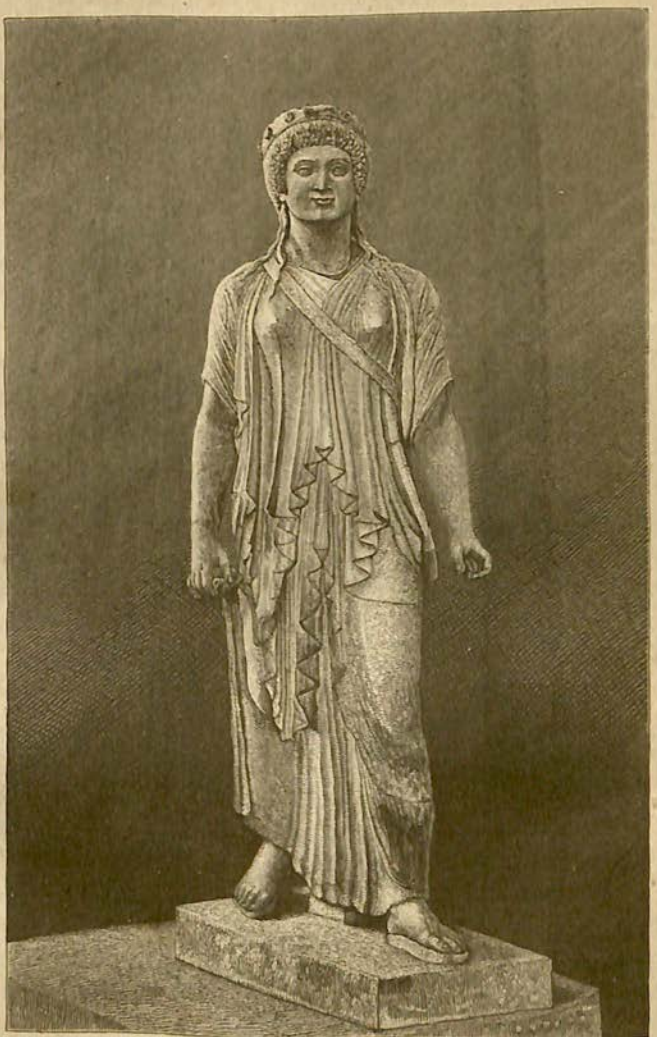
There are two full-length reliefs—one preserved in a little church near Orchomenus, of which I could not obtain a photograph, but which will be described hereafter, and another at Athens in the Theseion—which are plainly of the same epoch and style of art. The Athenian one is inscribed as the work of Aristion, doubtless an artist known as contemporary with those who fought at the battle of Ma-

STELE OF ARISTION. P. 63.

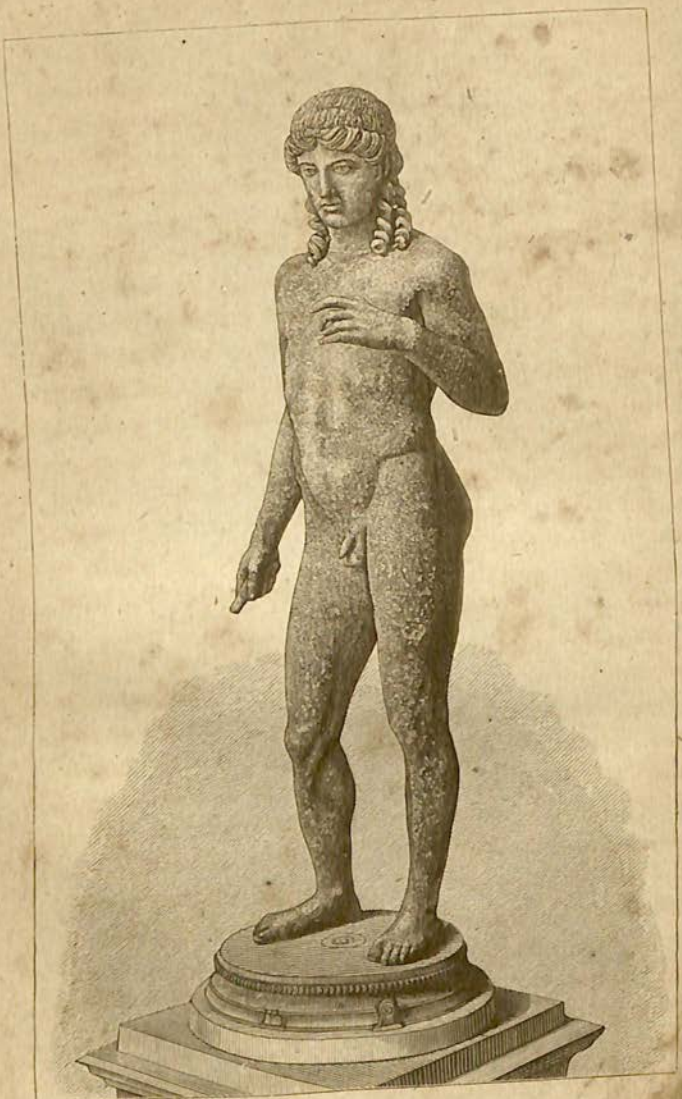
rathon. Thus we obtain a very good clue to the date at which this art flourished. Any impartial observer will see in these figures strong traces of the influence of Assyrian style. In fact, if this figure of Aristion, or the other near Orchomenus, were found among professedly Assyrian reliefs, they would excite no surprise. This influence seems as certain, and almost as much disputed, as the Egyptian influences on the Doric style of architecture. To my mind these influences speak so plainly, that, in the absence of strict demonstration to the contrary, I feel bound to admit them—the more so, as we know that the Greeks, like all other people of genius, were ever ready and anxious to borrow from others. It should be often repeated, because it is usually ignored, that it is a most original gift to know how to borrow; and that those only who feel wanting in originality are anxious to assert it. Thus the Romans, who borrowed without assimilating, are always asserting their originality; the Greeks, who borrowed more and better, because they made what they borrowed their own, never care to do so. The hackneyed parallel of Shakespeare will occur to all.

Unfortunately, the museums of Athens show us hardly any examples of the transition state of art between this and the perfect work of Phidias' school. The Æginetan marbles are less developed than Phidias' work; but from the relief of Aristion,

and the Theseus of the Acropolis, to these, is a wide gulf in artistic feeling. There is also the well-known Apollo of Thera, and a small sitting Athene in the Acropolis, which, though very archaic, begin to approach the grace of artistic sculpture. But Italy is sufficiently rich in imitations of this very period. There are four very remarkable statues in a small room of the Villa Albani near Rome, which are not photographed, because the public would, doubtless, think them bad art, but which, could I procure them and reproduce them, would illustrate clearly what I desire. We have also among the bronzes found at Pompeii two statues precisely of this style, evidently copies from old Greek originals, and made to satisfy the pre-Raphaelitism (as I have already called it) of Italian amateurs. These are the Apollo and Artemis. The Artemis is the more archaistic of the two, and I, therefore, take this specimen first. It maintains in the face the very features which we think so comical when looking at the relief of Aristion, or any of the older vases. They are, no doubt, softened and less exaggerated, but still they are there. The so-called Greek profile is not yet attained. The general features of the old Greek face in monuments were a retreating forehead, peaked nose, slightly turned up at the end, the mouth drawn in and the corners turned up, flat elongated eyes (especially full eyes in the profiles of reliefs), a prominent angular chin, lank cheeks, and high ears. These lovely features



ARCHAISTIC ARTEMIS (NAPLES). P. 64.



ARCHAISTIC BRONZE APOLLO (AT NAPLES). P. 65.

can be found on hundreds of vases, because vase-making being rather a trade than an art, men kept close to the old models long after great sculptors and painters had, like Polygnotus, began to depart from the antique stiffness of the countenance.[1] The Artemis before us has, however, these very features, which are very clear when we can see her in profile. But the head-dress and draping are elaborate, and though formal and somewhat stiff, not wanting in grace. The pose of the arms is stiff, and the attitude that of a woman stepping forward, which is very usual in archaic figures—I suppose because it enlarged the base of the statue, and made it stand more firmly in its place. The absence of any girdle, or delaying fold in the garments is one of the most marked contrasts with the later draping of such figures.

Passing on to the Apollo, we notice a much greater development of freedom as to the treatment of the face, which, without being very handsome and well formed, is certainly not ugly. But the heavy hair and long curls are distinctly in the antique style, and the proportions of the figure are much shorter and stouter than later Greeks or than we should consider graceful. The style of this statue, however, though differing in many special proportions, reminds us strongly of the Æginetan marbles in Munich, and so leads us from archaic stiffness into the true period of beauty and of perfection.

[1] 'Vultum ab antiquo rigore variare.'—Plin. xxxv. 35.

This greater age is represented in the museums of Athens chiefly through the reliefs of the Parthenon, which I mean to consider separately, through the statue of the athlete already noted, and through many beautiful fragments, so mutilated that they can hardly be used as illustrations.

We shall, therefore, do well to go out of the museums to the street of tombs, where we can find such material as the world can hardly equal, and in such condition as to be easily intelligible. What I have said of the museums is, doubtless, disappointing, as, indeed, it should be, if the feeling of the visitor is to be faithfully reproduced. But I must not fail to add, before turning to other places, that, in inscriptions, these museums are very rich, as well as also in Attic vases, and lamps, and other articles of great importance in our estimate of old Greek life. The professors of the University have been particularly diligent in deciphering and explaining the inscriptions, and with the aid of the Germans, who have collected, and are still collecting, these scattered documents in a complete publication, we are daily having new light thrown upon Greek history. Thus Köhler has been able from the recovered Attic tribute-lists to construct a map of the Athenian maritime empire with its dependencies, which tells the student more in five minutes than hours' laborious reading. The study of vases and lamps is beyond my present scope; and the former so wide and important a subject,

that it cannot be mastered without vast study and trouble.

I pass, therefore, from the museums to the street of tombs, which Thucydides tells us to find in the fairest suburb of the city, as we go out westward towards the graves of Academe, and before we turn slightly to the south on our way to the Peiræus. Thucydides has described with some care the funeral ceremonies held in this famous place, and has composed for us a very noble funeral oration, which he has put in the mouth of Pericles.[1] It is with this oration, probably the finest passage in Thucydides' great history, in our minds, that we approach the avenue where the Athenians laid their dead. We have to pass through the most mean and miserable portion of modern Athens, through wretched *bazaars* and dirty markets, which abut upon the main street, through which we walk. Amid all this squalor and poverty, all this complete denial of art and leisure, there are still features which faintly echo old Greek life. There is the bright colour of the dresses—the predominance of white, and red, and blue, of which the

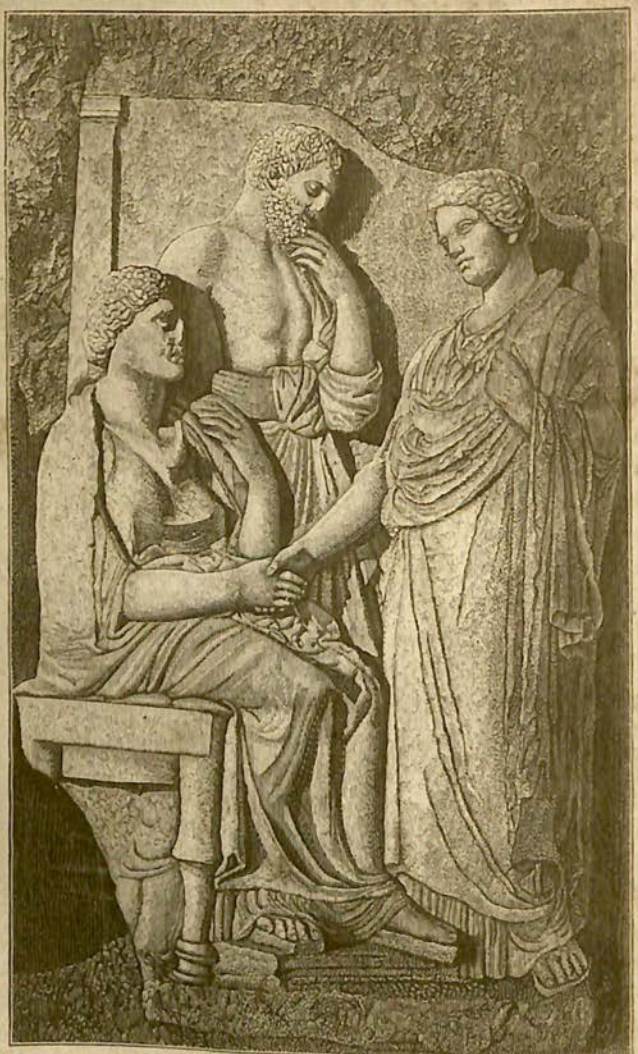
[1] These panegyrics, λόγοι ἐπιταφίοι they were called, were a favourite exercise of Greek literary men. There are four still extant—that mentioned, that in the Menexenus of Plato, and the ἐπιταφίοι of Lysias, and of Hypereides. That of Hypereides, very mutilated as it is, seems to me the finest next to that of Thucydides. But they are all built upon the same lines, showing even here that strict conservatism in every branch of Greek art which never varied, for variety's sake, from a type once recognised as really good.

old Athenians were so fond; and there is among the lowest classes a great deal of that striking beauty which recals to us the old statues. More especially in the form of the head, and in the expression, of the children, we see types not to be found elsewhere in Europe, and which, if not derived from classical Greece, are at all events very beautiful.

We then come on to the railway station, which is, indeed, in this place, as elsewhere, very offensive. With its grimy smoke, its shrill sounds, and all its other hard unloveliness, it is not a meet neighbour for the tombs of the old Greeks, situate close to it on all sides.

They lie—as almost all old ruins do—far below the present level of the ground, and have, therefore, to be exhumed by careful digging. When this has been done, they are covered with a rude door, to protect their sculptured face; and when I saw them, were standing about, without any order or regularity, close to the spots where they had been found.

A proper estimate of these tombs cannot be attained without knowing clearly the feelings with which the survivors set them up. And upon this point we have not only the general attitude of Greek literature on the all-important question of the state of man after death, but we have also thousands of inscriptions upon tombs, both with and without sculptured reliefs, from which we can form a very sure opinion about the feelings of the bereaved in these bygone days.



TOMB IN THE CERAMEICUS (ATHENS). P. 69.

We know from Homer and from Mimnermus that in the earlier periods, though the Greeks were unable to shake off a belief in life after death, yet they could not conceive that state as anything but a shadowy and wretched echo of the real life upon earth. It was a gloomy and dark existence, burdened with the memory of lost happiness and the longing for lost enjoyment. To the Homeric Greeks their death was a dark, unavoidable fate, without hope and without reward. It is, indeed, true that we find in Pindar thoughts and aspirations of a very different kind. We have in the fragments of his poetry which remain to us more than one passage asserting the reward of the just, and the splendours of a future life far happier than that which we now enjoy. But, notwithstanding these splendid visions, such high expectation laid no hold upon the imagination of the Greek world. The poems of Pindar, we are told, soon ceased to be popular, and his utterances are but a streak of light amid general gloom. The kingdom of the dead in Æschylus is evidently, as in Homer, but a weary echo of this life, where honour can only be attained by the pious memory of attached relations, whose duty paid to the dead affects him in his gloomier state, and raises him in the esteem of his less-remembered fellows. Sophocles says nothing to clear away the night; nay, rather his last and maturest contemplation regards death as the worst of ills to the happy man—a sorry refuge to the

miserable. Euripides longs that there may be no future state, and Plato only secures the immortality of the soul by severing it from the person—the man, and all his interests.

It is plain, from these evidences, that the Greeks must have looked upon the death of those they loved with unmixed sorrow. It was the final parting, when all the good and pleasant things are remembered. Men seek, as it were, to increase the pang, by clothing the dead in all his sweetest and dearest presence. But this was not done by pompous inscriptions, nor by a vain enumeration of all the deceased had performed—inscriptions which, among us, tell more of the vanity than of the grief of the survivors. The commonest epitaph was a simple χαῖρε, or farewell; and it is this simple word, so full and deep in its meaning to those who love, which is pictured in the reliefs of which I am now speaking. They are simple parting scenes, expressing the grief of the survivors, and the true, simple grief of the sufferer, who is going to his long home. But what strikes us most forcibly in these remarkable monuments, is the chastened, modest expression of grief which they express. There is no violence, no despair, no exaggeration—all is simple and noble; thus combining purity of art with a far deeper pathos—a far nobler grief—than the exaggerated paintings and sculptures which seek to express mourning in later and less cultivated ages. We may defy any art to

produce truer or more poignant pictures of real sorrow—a sorrow, as I have explained, far deeper and more hopeless, than any Christian sorrow; and yet there is no wringing of hands, no swooning, no defacing with sack-cloth and ashes. Sometimes, indeed, as in the celebrated tomb of Dexileos, a mere portrait of the dead in active life was put upon his tomb, and private grief would not assert itself in presence of the record of his public services.

I know not that any remnants of Greek art bring home to us more plainly one of its eternal and divine features—or shall I rather say, one of its eternal and human features?—the greatest, if not the main feature, which has made it the ever new and everlasting lawgiver to men in their struggles to represent the ideal.

If I am to permit myself any digression whatever, surely we cannot do better than to conclude this chapter with some reflections on so important a subject, and we may, therefore, turn, by suggestion of the Athenian tombs, to a few general reflections on the *reserve* of Greek art: I mean the reserve in displaying emotion, in staying the fierce outburst of joy or grief; and again, the reserve more generally in exhibiting peculiar or personal features, passing interests, or momentary emotions.

In a philosophy now well nigh extinct, but which once commanded no small attention, Adam Smith was led to analyse the indirect effects of *sympathy*, from which, as a single principle, he desired to

deduce all the rules of ethics. While straining many points unduly, he must be confessed to have explained with great justice the origin of good taste or tact in ordinary life, which he saw to be the careful watching of the interest of others in our own affairs, and the feeling that we must not force upon them what interests ourselves, except we are sure to carry with us their active sympathy. Good breeding, he says, consists in a delicate perception how far this will go, and in suppressing those of our feelings which, though they affect *us* strongly, cannot be expected to affect our neighbour in like manner. His sympathy should be the measure and limit of our out-spokenness. There can be no doubt that whatever other elements come in, this analysis is true, so far as it goes, and recommends itself at once to the convictions of any educated man. The very same principle applies still more strongly and universally in art. Just as tragedy is bound to treat ideal griefs and joys, of so large and broad a kind, that every spectator may merge in it his petty woes, so ideal sculpture and painting is only ideal, if it represent such large and eternal features in human nature as must always command the sympathy of every pure human heart.

Let us dispose at once of an apparent exception—the mediæval pictures of the Passion of Christ, and the sorrows of the Virgin Mary. Here the artist allowed himself the most extreme treatment, because the objects were necessarily the centre of

the very highest sympathy. No expression of the grief of Christ could be thought exaggerated in the Middle Ages, because in this very exaggeration lay the centre point of men's religion. But when no such object of universal and all-absorbing sympathy can be found (and there was none such in pagan life), then the Greek artist must attain by his treatment of the object what the Christian artist obtained by the object itself. Assuming, then, a mastery over his material, and sufficient power of execution, the next feature to be looked for in Greek art, and especially in Greek sculpture, is a certain modesty and reserve in expression, which will not portray slight defects in picturing a man, but represent eternal and ideal character in him, which remains in the memory of men when he is gone. Such, for example, is our famous portrait of Sophocles.

Such are also all that great series of ideal figures which meet us in the galleries of ancient art. They seldom show us any violent emotion; they are seldom even in so special an attitude, that critics cannot interpret it in several different ways, or as suitable to several myths. It is not passing states of feeling, but the eternal and ideal beauty of human nature, which Greek sculpture seeks to represent; and it is for this reason that it has held its sway over all the centuries which have since passed away. This was the calm art of Phidias, and Polycletus, and Polygnotus, in sentiment not

differing from the rigid awkwardness of their predecessors, but in mastery of proportions, and of difficulties attaining the grace in which the others had failed. To this general law there are, no doubt, exceptions, and perhaps very brilliant ones; but they are exceptions, and even in them, if we consider them attentively, we can see the universal features, and the points of sympathy for all mankind. But if, indeed, the appeal for sympathy is overstrained, then, however successful in its own society, and its own social atmosphere, the work of art loses power in another generation. Thus the tragic poet Euripides, though justly considered in his own society the most tragic of poets, has for this very reason ceased to appeal to us as Æschylus has always done. He kept within the proper bounds dictated by the reserve of art; Euripides often did not, and his work, though great and full of genius, suffered accordingly.

It seems to me that the tombs before us are remarkable in observing, with the tact of genius, this true and perfect reserve. They are simple pictures of the grief of parting—of the recollection of pleasant days of love and friendship—of the gloom of the unknown future. But there is no exaggeration, nor speciality, no individuality, I had almost said, in the picture. I feel no curiosity to inquire who these people are—what were their names—even what was the relationship of the deceased. For I am perfectly satisfied with an

ideal portrait of the grief of parting—a grief that comes to us all, and lays bitter hold of us at some season of life; and it is this universal sorrow—this great common flaw in all our lives—which the Greek artist has brought before us, and which calls forth our deepest sympathy. There will be future occasion to come back upon this all-important feature in art in connexion with the action in Greek sculpture, and even with the draping of their statues—in all of which the calm and chaste reserve of the better Greek art contrasts strangely with the Michael Angelos, and Berninis, and Canovas of other days; nay, even with the Greek sculpture of a no less brilliant, but less refined age.

But, in concluding this chapter, I will call attention to a modern parallel in the portraiture of grief, and of grief at final parting. This parallel is not a piece of sculpture, but a poem, perhaps the most remarkable poem of our generation—the *In Memoriam* of Tennyson. Though written apparently from personal feeling, and to commemorate a special person—Arthur Hallam—whom some of us even knew, this poem has justly laid hold of the imagination of men strongly and lastingly; and why? Is it owing to the poet's special loss? Certainly not. I do not even think that this great dirge—this magnificent funeral poem—has excited in us the least interest in Arthur Hallam. I will confess that to me he appeared nothing more after I knew the poem than he was before. In fact, any

other friend of the poet's would have suited the general reader equally well, as the exciting cause of a poem, which we delight in, because it puts into great poetry those ever-recurring permanent features in such grief; those dark longings about the future—those suggestions of despair; of discontent in the providence of the world; of wild speculation about its laws; and the struggle to reconcile our own loss, and that of the human race, with some larger law of wisdom and of benevolence. To the poet, of course, his own particular friend was the great centre point of the poem. But to us, in reading it, there is a wide distinction between the personal passages—I mean those which give family details, and special circumstances in Hallam's life, and his intimacy with the poet—and the truly poetical or artistic passages, which soar away into a region far above all special detail, and sing of the great gloom which hangs over the future, and of the vehement beating of the human soul against the bars of its prison home, where one is taken, and another left, not merely at apparent random, but with apparent injustice and damage to mankind. Hence, every man in grief for a lost friend will read the poem to his great comfort, and will then only see clearly what it means; and he will find it speak to him specially and particularly, not in its personal passages, but in its general features; in its hard metaphysics; in its mystical theology; in its angry and uncertain ethics. For even the commonest mind is

forced by grief out of its commonness, and attacks the world-problems, which at other times it has no power or taste to approach.

By this illustration, then, the distinction between the universal and the personal features of grief can be clearly seen; and the reader will admit that, though it would be most unreasonable to dictate to the poet, or to imagine that he should have omitted the stanzas which refer specially to his friend, and which were to him of vital importance, yet to us it is no loss to forget that name and those circumstances, and hold fast to the really eternal, and because eternal, really artistic features in that very noble symphony, shall I say of half-resolved discords, or of suspended harmonies, which faith may reconcile, but which reason can hardly analyse or understand?

Within a few minutes' walk of these splendid records of the illustrious dead the traveller who leaves the Piræus road, and returns to the town across the Observatory Hill, will find a very different cemetery. For here he suddenly comes up to a long cleft in the rock, running parallel with the road below, and therefore quite invisible from it. The rising ground towards the city hides it equally from the Acropolis, and accordingly from all Athens. This gorge, some 100 yards long, 25 wide, and about 30 feet deep, is the notorious *Barathrum*, the place of execution in old days; the place where criminals were cast out, and where the public executioner resided. It has been falsely inferred by the old scholiasts that the

Athenians cast men alive into the pit. It is not nearly deep enough now to cause death in this way, and there seems no reason that its original depth should have been diminished by any accumulation of rubbish, such as is common on inhabited sites. 'Casting into the Barathrum,' referred rather to the refusing the rites of burial to executed criminals—an additional disgrace, and to the Greeks a grave additional penalty. The honour among the dead was held to follow in exact proportion to the continued honours paid by surviving friends.

Here, then, out of view of all the temples and hallowed sites of the city dwelt the public slave, with his instruments of death, perhaps in a cave or grotto, still to be seen in the higher wall of the gorge, and situated close to the point where an old path leads over the hill towards the city. Plato speaks of young men turning aside, as they came from Piræus, to see the dead lying in charge of this official; and there must have been times in the older history of Athens when this cleft in the rock was a place of carnage and of horror. The gentler law of later days seems to have felt this outrage on human feeling, and instead of casting the dead into the Barathrum, it was merely added to the sentence that the body should not be buried within the boundaries of Attica.[1] Yet, though the

[1] This reasonable inference, which I had not made when writing my *Social Greece* (p. 267), was since pointed out to me by Mr. Hermann Hager, of Manchester, to whom I return my thanks.

Barathrum may have been no longer used, the accursed gate (ἱερὰ πύλη) still led to it from the city, and the old associations clung about its gloomy seclusion. Even in the last century, the Turks, whether acting from instinct, or led by old tradition, still used it as a place of execution.

In the present day, all traces of this hideous history have long passed away, and I found a little field of corn waving upon the level ground beneath, which had once been the *Aceldama* of Athens. But even now there seemed a certain loneliness and weirdness about the place—silent and deserted in the midst of thoroughfares, hidden from the haunts of men, and hiding them from view by its massive walls. Nay, as if to bring back the dark memories of the past, hawks and ravens were still circling about as their ancestors did in the days of blood; attached, I suppose, by hereditary instinct to this fatal place, 'for where the carcase is, there shall the eagles be gathered together.'

CHAPTER IV.

THE ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS.

I SUPPOSE there can be no doubt whatever that the ruins on the Acropolis of Athens are the most remarkable in the world. There are ruins far larger, such as the Pyramids, and the remains of Karnak. There are ruins far more perfectly preserved, such as the great Temple at Pæstum. There are ruins more picturesque, such as the ivy-clad walls of mediæval abbeys beside the rivers in the rich valleys of England. But there is no ruin all the world over which combines so much striking beauty, so distinct a type, so vast a volume of history, so great a pageant of immortal memories. There is, in fact, no building on earth which can sustain the burden of such greatness, and so the first visit to the Acropolis is and must be disappointing. When the traveller reflects how all the Old World's culture culminated in Greece—all Greece in Athens—all Athens in its Acropolis—all the Acropolis in the Parthenon—so much crowds upon the mind confusedly that we look for some enduring monument whereupon we can fasten our minds,

and from which we can pass as from a visible starting-point into all this history and all this greatness. And at first we look in vain. The shattered pillars and the torn pediments will not bear so great a strain: and the traveller feels forced to admit a sense of disappointment, sore against his will. He has come a long journey into the remoter parts of Europe; he has reached at last what his soul had longed for many years in vain: and as is wont to be the case with all great human longings, the truth does not answer to his desire. The pang of disappointment is all the greater when he sees that the tooth of time and the shock of earthquake had done but little harm. It is the hand of man—of reckless foe and ruthless lover—which has robbed him of his hope. This is the feeling, I am sure, of more than have confessed it, when they first wound their way through the fields of great blue aloes, and passed up through the Propylæa into the presence of the Parthenon.[1] But to those who have not given way to these feelings—who have gone again and again and sat upon the rock, and watched the ruins in every hour of the day, and in the brightness of a moonlight night—to those who have dwelt among them, and meditated upon them with love and awe—there first come back the remembered glories of Athens' greatness,

[1] I am bound to add, that very competent observers, among others Professor Sayce, have not felt this disappointment.

when Olympian Pericles stood upon this rock with care-worn Phidias, and reckless Alcibiades with pious Nicias, and fervent Demosthenes with caustic Phocion—when these and one hundred others peopled those temples in their worship, and all the fluted pillars and sculptured friezes were bright with scarlet, and blue, and gold. And then the glory of remembered history casts its hue over the war-stained remnants. Every touch of human hand, every fluting, and drop, and triglyph, and cornice, recals the master minds who produced this splendour; and so at last we tear ourselves from it as from a thing of beauty, which even now we can never know, and love, and meditate upon to our earts' content.

Nothing is more vexatious than the reflection, how lately these splendid remains have been reduced to their present state. The Parthenon, being used as a Greek church, remained untouched and perfect all through the Middle Ages. Then it became a mosque, and the Erechtheum a seraglio, and in this way survived without damage till 1687, when in the bombardment by the Venetians under Morosini a shell dropped into the Parthenon, where the Turks had their powder stored, and blew out the whole centre of the building. Eight or nine pillars, at each side have been thrown down, and have left a large gap, which so severs the front and rear of the temple, that from the city below they look like the remains of two different buildings.

THE PARTHENON—WEST FRONT. P. 82.

The great drums of these pillars are yet lying there, in their order, just as they fell, and a little money and care could set them all up again in their places; yet there is not in Greece the patriotism or even the common sense to enrich the country by this restoration, matchless in its certainty, as well as in its splendour.

But the Venetians were not content with their exploit. They were, about this time, when they held possession of most of Greece, emulating the Pisan taste for Greek sculptures, and the four fine lions standing at the gate of the arsenal in Venice still testify to their zeal in carrying home Greek trophies to adorn their capital. Morosini wished to take down the sculptures of Phidias from one of the pediments, but his workmen attempted it so clumsily, that the figures fell from their place, and were dashed to pieces on the ground. The Italians left their final mark on the place by building a high square tower of wretched patched masonry at the right side of the entrance gate, which has of late years become such an eyesore to the better educated public, that when I was at Athens there was a subscription on foot to have it taken down—a good deed, which will not only remove a most offensive reminiscence of the intruders, but which ought to bring to light some pillars of the Propylæa built into it, as well as many inscribed stones, broken off and carried away

from their places as building material.[1] The Turks, according to Dodwell, who is a most trustworthy witness, never destroyed the old buildings except they wanted them for masonry. He tells us not to believe that the figures of the remaining pediment were used as targets by the Turkish soldiers — a stâtement often made in his day. However that may be, I have little doubt, from what I saw myself, that Greek soldiers in the present day might do so. But the Turks did take down some pillars of the Propylæa while Dodwell was there, for building purposes, an occurrence which gave that excellent observer the opportunity of noting the old Greek way of fitting the drums of the pillars together. He even got into his possession one of the pieces of cypress wood used as plugs between the stone masses.

But the same traveller was also present when a far more determined and systematic attack was made upon the remaining ruins of the Parthenon. While he was travelling in the interior, Lord Elgin had obtained his famous firman from the Sultan, to take down and remove any antiquities or

[1] This expectation has not been verified by the results. I hear from Athens that the tower has been taken down by the liberality of M. Schliemann, and that as yet there have been hardly any inscriptions or sculptures discovered. But probably the ruins have not yet been thoroughly searched, and still more probably the workmen have secreted what they found, so as to sell it privately.

sculptured stones he might require, and the infuriated Dodwell saw a set of ignorant workmen, under equally ignorant overseers, let loose upon the splendid ruins of the age of Pericles. He speaks with much good sense and feeling of this proceeding. He is fully aware that the world would derive inestimable benefit from the transplanting of these splendid fragments to an accessible place, but he cannot find language strong enough to express his disgust at the way in which the thing was done. Incredible as it may appear, Lord Elgin himself seems not to have superintended the work, but to have left it to paid contractors, who undertook the job for a fixed sum. Little as either Turks or Greeks cared for the ruins, he says that a pang of grief was felt through all Athens at the desecration, and that the contractors were obliged to bribe workmen with additional wages to undertake the ungrateful task. Dodwell will not even mention Lord Elgin by name, but speaks of him with disgust as 'the person' who defaced the Parthenon. He believes that had this person been at Athens himself, his underlings could hardly have behaved in the reckless way they did, pulling down more than they wanted, and taking no care to prop up and save the work from which they had taken the supports.

He especially notices their scandalous proceeding upon taking up one of the great white marble blocks which form the floor or stylobate of the temple.

They wanted to see what was underneath, and Dodwell, who was there, saw the foundation—a substructure of Piræic sandstone. But when they had finished their inspection they actually left the block they had removed, without putting it back into its place. So this beautiful pavement, made merely of closely-fitting blocks, without any artificial or foreign joinings, was ripped up, and the work of its destruction begun. I am happy to add that, though a considerable rent was then made, most of it is still intact, and the traveller of to-day may still walk on the very stones which bore the tread of every great Athenian.

The question has often been discussed, whether Lord Elgin was justified in carrying off this pediment, the metopes, and the friezes, from their place, and the Greeks of to-day hope confidently that the day will come when England will restore these treasures to their place. This is, of course, absurd, and it may fairly be argued that people who would bombard their antiquities in a revolution are not fit custodians of them in the intervals of domestic quiet. This was my reply to an old Greek General who assailed the memory of Lord Elgin with reproaches. I told him that I was credibly informed the Greeks had themselves bombarded the Turks in the Acropolis during the war of liberation, as several great pieces knocked out and starred on the western front testify. He confessed, to my amusement, that he had himself been one of the assailants, and excused

the act by the necessities of war. I replied that, as the country seemed always on the verge of a revolution, the sculptures might at least remain in the British Museum until a secure government was established. And this is the general verdict of learned men on the matter. They are agreed that it was on the whole a gain to science, and a justifiable act, to remove the figures, but all stigmatise as barbarous and shameful the reckless way in which the work was carried out.

I confess I agreed with this judgment until I came home from Greece, and went to see the spoil in its place in our great Museum. Though there treated with every care—though shown to the best advantage, and explained by excellent models of the whole building, and clear descriptions of their place on it—notwithstanding all this I found that these wonderful fragments lost so terribly by being separated from their place—they looked so unmeaning in an English room, away from their temple, their country, and their lovely atmosphere—that I earnestly wished they had never been taken from their place, even at the risk of being made a target by the Greeks or the Turks. I am convinced, too, that the few who would have seen them, as intelligent travellers, on their famous rock, would have gained in quality the advantage now diffused among many, but weakened and almost destroyed by the wrench in associations, when the ornament is severed from its surface, and

the decoration of a temple exhibited apart from the temple itself. I think, then, that it had been better if Lord Elgin had never taken away these marbles. I repeat that it would be absurd to send them back. There are now a large number of pillars of the Parthenon lying on the ground, which were thrown down by the explosion of 1687. The great drums, as I before said, are all lying in their places, just as they fell; and all that is required to set them up again, and so unite the fore and aft parts of the temple, now severed by a huge gap, is a little money and a little labour. The Greek nation have never attempted even this. But were the Elgin marbles sent back to the Greeks, they would merely put them by in one of their gaunt, ill-arranged, uncatalogued museums. I need hardly say that the British Museum is a far nobler and more worthy resting-place for them than such an exile.

There are, indeed, preserved in the little museum on the Acropolis the broken remains of the figures of the eastern pediment, which Morosini and his Venetians endeavoured to take down, as I have already told. But they are little more than pieces of drapery, of some use in reconstructing the composition, but of none in judging the effect of that famous group.

But we must not yet enter into this little museum, which is most properly put out of sight, at the lowest or east corner of the rock, and which we do not

reach till we have passed through all the ruins. As the traveller stands at the inner gate of the Propylæa, he notices at once all the perfect features of the ruins. Over his head are the enormous architraves of the Propylæa—blocks of white marble over 22 feet long, which spanned the gateway from pillar to pillar. Opposite, above him, and a little to the right, is the mighty Parthenon, not identical in orientation, as the architects have observed, with the gateway, but so varying from it slightly that sun and shade would play upon it at moments differing from the rest, and thus produce a perpetual variety of lights. This principle is observed in the setting of the Erechtheum also. To the left, and directly over the town, stands that beautifully-decorated little Ionic temple, or combination of temples, with the stately Caryatids looking inwards and towards the Parthenon. These two buildings are the most perfect examples we have of their respective styles. We see the objects of the artists who built them at first sight. The one is the embodiment of majesty, the other of grace. The very ornaments of the Parthenon are large and massive; those of the Erechtheum for the most part intricate and delicate. Thus the Parthenon is in the Doric style, or rather in the Doric style so refined and adorned as to be properly called the Attic style.

For the more we study the old Athenian art—nay, even old Athenian character generally—the more are we convinced that its greatness consists in

the combination of Doric sternness and Ionic grace. It is hardly a mediation between them; it is the adoption of the finer elements of both, and the union of them into a higher harmony. The most obvious illustration of this is the drama, where the Ionic element of recitation and the Doric choral hymn were combined—and let me observe that the Ionic element was more modified than the Doric. In the same way Attic architecture used the strength and majesty of the older style which we see at Corinth and Pæstum; but relieved it partly by lighter proportions, partly by rich decorations, which gave the nearer observer an additional and different delight, while from afar the large features were of the old Doric majesty. Even in the separate decorations, such as the metopes and friezes, the graceful women and the long-flowing draperies of the Ionic school were combined with the muscular nakedness of the Doric athlete, as represented by Doric masters. Individual Attic masters worked out these contrasted types completely, as we may see by the *Discobolus* of Myron, a contemporary of Phidias, and the *Apollo Musagetes* of Scopas, who lived somewhat later.

In fact, all Athenian character, in its best days, combined the versatility, and luxury, and fondness of pleasure, which marked the Ionian, with the energy, the public spirit, and the simplicity which was said to mark the better Doric states. The Parthenon and Erechtheum express all this in visi-

ble clearness. The Athenians felt that the Ionic elegance and luxury of style was best suited to a small building; and so they lavished ornament and colour upon this beautiful little building, but made the Doric temple the main object of all the sacred height.

It is worth while to consult the professional architects, like Revett,[1] who have examined these buildings with a critical eye. Not only were the old Athenian architects perfect masters of their materials, of accurate measurement, of precise correspondences, of all calculations as to strain and pressure—they even for artistic, as well as for practical, purposes, deviated systematically from accuracy, in order that the harmony of the building might profit by this imperceptible discord. They gave and took, like a tuner tempering the strings of a musical instrument. The stylobate is not exactly level, but raised four inches in the centre: the pillars are not set perpendicularly, but with a slight incline inwards: the separation of the pillars is less at the corners, and gradually increases as you approach the centre of the building. It is not my province to go into minute details on such points, which can only be adequately discussed by architects. What I have here to note is, that the old Greek builders had

[1] The splendid work of Michaelis is probably the most complete and critical account both of the plan and the details, which have often been published, especially and with great accuracy by Penrose.

gone beyond mere consummate accuracy and regularity. They knew a higher law than the slavish repetition of accurate distances or intervals; they had learned to calculate effects, to allow for optical illusions; they knew how to sacrifice real for ideal symmetry.

The sculptures of the Parthenon have given rise to a very considerable literature—so considerable that the books and treatises upon them now amount to a respectable library. The example was set by the architect of the building itself, Ictinus, who wrote a special treatise on his masterpiece. As is well known, it was sketched in chalk by the French painter, Jacques Carrey, a few years before the explosion of 1687; and though he had but very imperfect notions of Greek art, and introduced a good deal of seventeenth-century style into the chaste designs of Phidias, still these drawings, of which there are copies in the British Museum, are of great value in helping us to put together the broken and imperfect fragments which remain.[1]

The sculptured decorations of the building are of three kinds, or applied in three distinct places. In the first place, the two triangular *pediments* over the east and west front were each filled with a group of statues more than life size—the one representing the birth of Athene, and the other her contest with

[1] They will be most readily consulted in the plates of Michaelis' *Parthenon*.

THE PARTHENON—A BLOCK FROM THE FRIEZE OF THE CELLA.

Poseidon for the patronage of Athens. Some of the figures from one of these are the great draped, headless women in the centre of the Parthenon room of the British Museum: other fragments of those broken by the Venetians are preserved at Athens, There are, secondly, the *metopes*, or plaques of stone inserted into the frieze between the triglyphs, and carved in relief with a single small group on each. The height of these surfaces does not exceed four feet. There was, thirdly, a band of reliefs running all round the external wall of the cella, inside the surrounding pillars, and opposite to them, and this is known as the *frieze of the cella*. It consists of a great Panathenaic procession, starting from the western front, and proceeding in two divisions along the parallel north and south walls, till they meet on the eastern front, which was the proper front of the temple. Among the Elgin marbles there are a good many of the metopes, and also of the pieces of the cella frieze, preserved. Several other pieces of the frieze are preserved at Athens, and altogether we can reconstruct fully three-fourths of this magnificent composition.

There seems to me the greatest possible difference in merit between the metopes and the other two parts of the ornament. The majority of the metopes which I have seen represent either a Greek and an Amazon, or a Centaur and Lapith in violent conflict. It appeared plainly to me

that the main object of these contorted groups was to break in upon the squareness and straightness of all the other members of the Doric frieze and architrave. This is admirably done, as there is no conceivable design which more completely breaks the stiff rectangles of the entablature than the various and violent curves of wrestling figures. But, otherwise, these groups do not appear to me very interesting, except so far as everything in such a place, and the work of such hands, must be interesting.

It is very different with the others. Of these the pediment sculptures, which were, of course, the most important, and which were probably the finest groups ever designed, are so much destroyed or mutilated, that the effect of the composition is entirely lost, and we can only admire the matchless power and grace of the torsos which remain. The grouping of the figures was limited, and indicated by the triangular shape of the surface to be decorated—standing figures occupying the centre, while recumbent or stooping figures occupied the ends. But, as in poetry, where the shackles of rhyme and metre, which encumber the thoughts of ordinary writers, are the very source which produces in the true poet the highest and most precious beauties of expression; so in sculpture and painting, fixed conditions seem not to injure, but to enhance and perfect, the beauty and symmetry attainable in the highest art. We have apparently

in the famous Niobe group, preserved in Florence, the elements of a similar composition, perhaps intended to fill the triangular tympanum of a temple; and even in these weak Roman copies of a Greek masterpiece we can see how beautifully the limited space given to the sculptor determined the beauty and variety of the figures, and their attitudes. It was in this genius of grouping that I fancy Phidias chiefly excelled all his contemporaries: single statues of Polycleitus are said to have been preferred in competitions. To us the art of the *Discobolus* of Myron seems fully as great as that of any of the figures of the Parthenon; but no other artist seems to have possessed the architectonic power of adapting large subjects and processions of figures to their places like Phidias. How far he was helped or advised by Ictinus, or even by Pericles, it is not easy to say. But I do not fancy that Greek statesmen in those days studied everything else in the world besides statecraft, and were known as antiquarians, and linguists, and *connoisseurs* of china and paintings, and theologians, and novelists—in fact, everything under the sun. This many-sidedness, as they now call it, which the Greeks called πολυπραγμοσύνη, and thought to be meddlesomeness, was not likely to infect Pericles. He was very intimate with Phidias, and is said to have constantly watched his work, hardly I fancy, as an adviser, but rather as an humble and enthusiastic admirer of an art which did realise its ideal, while

he himself was striving in vain with rebel forces to attain his object in politics.

The extraordinary power of grouping in the designs of Phidias is, however, very completely shown us in the better preserved band of the cella frieze, along which the splendid Panathenaic procession winds its triumphal way. Over the eastern doorway were twelve noble sitting figures on either side of the officiating priest, presenting the state robe, or *peplos*, for the vestment of Athene. These figures are explained as gods by the critics; but they do not, in either beauty or dignity, excel those of many of the Athenians forming the procession. A very fine slab, containing three of these figures, is now to be seen in the little museum in the Acropolis. This group over the main entrance is the end and summary of all the procession, and corresponds with the yearly ceremony in this way, that, as the state entrance, or Propylæa, led into the Acropolis at the west end, or rear of the Parthenon, the procession in all probability separated into two, which went along both sides of the colonnade, and met again at the eastern door. Accordingly, over the western end, or rear, the first preparations of the procession are being made, which then starts along the north and south walls, the southern being chiefly occupied with the cavalcade of the Athenian knights, the northern with the carrying of sacred vessels, and leading of victims for the sacrifice.

The greater number of the pieces carried away by Lord Elgin seems taken from the equestrian portion in which groups of cantering and curveting horses, men in the act of mounting, and striving to curb restive steeds, are brought together with extraordinary effect. We can see plainly how important a part of Athenian splendour depended upon their knights, and how true the hints of Aristophanes are about their social standing, and aristocratic tone. The reins and armour, or at least portions of it, were laid on in metal, and have accordingly been long since plundered, nor has any obvious trace remained of the rich colours with which the whole was painted. There appears no systematic uniform, some of the riders being dressed in helmets and cuirasses, some in felt wide-awakes, and short-flying cloaks. It must remain uncertain whether the artist did not seek to obtain variety by this deviation from a fixed dress. There can be no doubt that Greek art was very bold and free in such matters. On the other hand, the type of the faces does not exhibit much variety. At the elevation above the spectator which this frieze occupied, individual expression would have been thrown away on figures of three feet in height: the general dress, and the attitudes, were, on the contrary, plainly and easily discernible.

But I confess that this equestrian procession does not appear to me so beautiful as the rows of figures on foot, carrying pitchers and other imple-

ments, leading victims, and playing pipes, which seem to come from the north wall, and of which the most beautiful slabs are preserved at Athens. Here we can see best of all that peculiar stamp which shows the age of Phidias to have been the most perfect in the whole of Greek sculpture. This statement will not be accepted readily by the general public. The Apollo Belvedere, the Capitoline Venus, the Dying Gladiator—these are what we have been always taught to regard as the greatest wonders of Greek glyptic art; and those who have accustomed themselves to this rich and sensuous beauty will not easily see the greatness and the perfection of the solemn and chaste art of Phidias.

Nevertheless, it will always be held by men who have thought long enough on the subject, that the epoch when Myron and Phidias, Polycleitus and Polygnotus, broke loose from archaic stiffness into flowing grace was, indeed, the climax of the arts. There seems a sort of natural law—of slow and painful origin—of growing development—of sudden bloom into perfection—of luxury and effeminacy—of gradual debasement and decay—which affects almost all the arts as well as most of the growths of nature. In Greek art particularly this phenomenon perpetually reappears. There can be little doubt that the Iliad of Homer was the first and earliest long creation in poetry, the first attempt, possibly with the aid of writing, to rise from short disconnected lays to the greatness of a

formal epic. And despite all its defects of plan, its want of firm consistency, and its obvious incongruities, this greatest of all poems has held its place against the more finished and interesting Odyssey, the more elaborated Cyclic poems, the more learned Alexandrian epics—in fact, the first full bloom of the art was by far the most perfect. It is the same thing with Greek tragedy. No sooner had the art escaped from the rude waggon, or whatever it was, of Thespis, than we find Æschylus, with imperfect appliances, with want of experience, with many crudenesses and defects, a tragic poet never equalled again in Greek history. Of course the modern critics of his own country preferred, first Sophocles, and then Euripides—great poets, as Praxiteles and Lysippus were great sculptors, and like them, perhaps, greater masters of human passion and of soul-stirring pathos. But for all that, Æschylus is *the* tragic poet of the Greeks—the poet who has reached beyond his age and nation, and fascinated the greatest men even of our century, who seek not to turn back upon his great but not equal rivals. Shelley and Swinburne have both made Æschylus their master, and to his inspiration owe the most splendid of their works.

I will not prosecute these considerations further, though there are many other examples to be found in the history of art. But I will say this much concerning the psychological reasons of so strange a phenomenon. It may, of course, be assumed that

the man who breaks through the old stiff conventional style which has bound his predecessors with its shackles, is necessarily a man of strong and original genius. Thus, when we are distinctly told of Polygnotus that he first began to vary the features of the human face from their archaic stiffness, we have before us a man of bold originality, who quarreled with the tradition of centuries, and probably set against him all the prejudices and the consciences of the graver public. But to us, far different features seem prominent. For in spite of all his boldness, when we compare him with his forerunners, we are struck with his modesty and devoutness, as compared with his successors. For there is in him, first, a devoutness towards his work, an old-fashioned piety, which they had not; and as art in this shape is almost always a handmaid of religion, this devoutness is a prominent feature. Next, there is a certain reticence and modesty in such a man, which arises partly from the former feeling, but still more from a conservative fear of violent change, and a healthy desire to make his work not merely a contrast to, but a development of, the older traditions. Then the old draped goddess of religious days, such as the *Venus Genitrix* in Florence, made way for the splendid but yet more human handling, which we may see in the Venus of Melos, now in the Louvre. This half-draped but yet thoroughly new and chaste conception leads naturally to the type said to have been first dared by Praxiteles,

who did not disguise the use of very unworthy human models to produce his famous, or perhaps infamous ideal, which is best known in the *Venus de Medici*, but more perfectly represented in the Venus of the Capitol. There is, too, in the earlier artist that limited mastery over materials, which, like the laws of the poet's language, only condenses and intensifies the beauty of his work.

Such reserve, as compared with the later phases of the art, is nowhere so strongly shown as in the matter of *expression*. This is, indeed, the rock on which most arts have ultimately shipwrecked. When the power over materials and effects becomes complete, so that the artist can as it were perform feats of conquest over them; when at the same time the feeling has died out that he is treading upon holy ground, we have splendid achievements in the way of exceeding expression, whether physical or mental, of force, of momentary transition, of grief or joy, which are good and great, but which lead imitators into a false track, and so ruin the art which they thought to perfect. Thus overreaching itself, art becomes an anxious striving after display, and, like an affected and meretricious woman, repels the sounder natures, which had else been attracted by her beauty. In Greek art especially, as I have already noticed in discussing the Attic tomb reliefs, this excess of expression was long and well avoided, and there is no stronger and more marked feature in its good

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epochs than the reserve of which I have spoken. It is the chief quality which makes the work of Phidias matchless. There is beauty in it of form, there is a good deal of action, there is in the frieze an almost endless variety; but withal there is the strictest symmetry, the closest adherence to fixed types, the absence of all attempt at expressing passing emotion. There is still the flavour of the old stiff simplicity about the faces, about the folds of the robes, about the type of the horses; but the feeling of the artist shines through the archaic simplicity with much clearer light than it does in the more ambitious attempts of the later school. The greatest works of Phidias—his statue of Zeus at Elis, and his Athene in the Parthenon—are lost to us; but the ancients are unanimous that for simple and sustained majesty no succeeding sculptor, however brilliant, had approached his ideal.

We may say almost the same of the great temple which he adorned with his genius. It is just that perfection of the Doric temple which has escaped from the somewhat ponderous massiveness and simplicity of the older architecture, while it sacrificed no element of majesty to that grace and delicacy which marks later and more developed Greek architecture. On this Acropolis the Athenians determined to show what architecture could reach in majesty, and what in delicacy. So they set up the Parthenon in that absolute perfection whose strength and solidity come out clearly shown, but

in no way overlaid, with ornament. They also built the Erechtheum, where they adopted the Ionic Order, and covered their entablature with bands of small and delicate tracing, which, with its gilding and colouring, was a thing to be studied minutely, and from the nearest distance. It seems to me as if the Ionic Order was in their opinion not well suited for large, stately exteriors. Though the inner columns of the Propylæa were Ionic (and they were very large), it appears that large temples in that order were not known in Attica. But for small and graceful buildings it was commonly used, and of these the Erechtheum was the most perfect.

In its great day, and even as Pausanias saw it, the Acropolis was covered with statues, as well as with shrines. It was not merely an Holy of Holies in religion; it was also a palace and museum of art. At every step and turn the traveller met new objects of interest. There were archaic specimens, chiefly interesting to the antiquarian and the devotee; there were the great master-pieces which were the joint admiration of the artist and the vulgar. Even all the sides and slopes of the great rock were honeycombed into sacred grottos, with their altars and their gods, or studded with votive monuments. All these lesser things are fallen away and gone; the sacred caves are filled with rubbish, and desecrated with worse than neglect. The grotto of Pan and Apollo is difficult of access,

and when reached, the object of disgust rather than of interest. There are left but the remnants of the surrounding wall and the ruins of the three principal buildings, which were the envy and wonder of all the civilised world.

I will venture to conclude this chapter with a curious comparison. It was my good fortune, a few months after I had seen the Acropolis, to visit a ruin in Ireland, which, to my great surprise, bore many curious resemblances to it—I mean the Rock of Cashel. Both were strongholds of religion—honoured and hallowed above all other places in their respective countries—both were covered with buildings of various dates, each representing their peculiar ages and styles in art. And as the Greeks, I suppose for effect's sake, have varied the posture of their temples, so that the sun illumines them at different moments, the old Irish have varied the orientation of their churches, that the sun might rise directly over against the east window on the anniversary of the patron saint. There is at Cashel the great Cathedral—in loftiness and grandeur the Parthenon of the place; there is the smaller and more beautiful Cormac's Chapel, the holiest of all, like the Erechtheum of Athens. Again, the great sanctuary upon the Rock of Cashel was surrounded by a cluster of other abbeys about its base, which were founded there by pious men on account of the greatness and holiness of the archiepiscopal seat. Of these one remains, like the

Theseum at Athens, eclipsed by the splendour of the Acropolis.

The prospect from the Irish sanctuary has, indeed, endless contrasts to that from the Pagan stronghold, but they are suggestive contrasts, and such as are not without a certain harmony. The plains around both are framed by mountains, of which the Irish are probably the more picturesque; and if the light upon the Greek hills is the fairest, the native colour of the Irish is infinitely more rich. So, again, the soil of Attica is light and sandy, whereas the Golden Vale of Tipperary is among the richest in the world. But who would not choose the historic treasures of the former in preference to the bucolic value of the latter? Still, both places were the noblest homes, each in their own country, of religions which civilised, humanised, and exalted the human race; and if the Irish Acropolis is left in dim obscurity by the historical splendour of the Parthenon, on the other hand, the gods of the Athenian stronghold have faded out before the moral greatness of the faith preached upon the Rock of Cashel.

CHAPTER V.

EXCURSIONS IN ATTICA—PHALERUM—LAURIUM.

WHEN you stand on the Acropolis and look round upon Attica, a great part of its history becomes immediately clear and unravelled. You see at once that you are situate in the principal plain of the country, surrounded with chains of mountains in such a way that it is easy to understand the old stories of wars with Eleusis, or with Marathon, or with any of the outlying valleys. Looking inland on the north side, as you stand beside the Erechtheum, you see straight before you, at a distance of some ten miles, Mount Pentelicus, from which all the splendid marble was once carried to the rock around you. This Pentelicus is a sort of intermediate cross-chain between two main lines which diverge from either side of it, and gradually widen so as to form the plain of Athens. The left or north-western chain is Mount Parnes; the right or eastern is Mount Hymettus. This latter, however, is only the outer margin of a large mountainous tract, which spreads all over the rest of South Attica down to the Cape of Sunium. There

are, of course, little valleys, and two or three villages, one of them the old deme Brauron, which they now pronounce Vravron. There is the town of Thorikos, near the mines of Laurium; there are two modern villages called Marcopoulos; but on the whole, both in ancient and modern times, this south-eastern part of Attica, south of Hymettus, was, with the exception of Laurium, of little moment. There is a gap between Pentelicus and Hymettus, nearly due north, through which the way leads out to Marathon; and you can see the spot where the bandits surprised in 1870 the unfortunate gentlemen who fell victims to the vacillation and incompetence of people in power at that time.

On the left side of Pentelicus you see the chain of Parnes, which almost closes with it at a far distance, and which stretches down all the west side of Attica, till it runs into the sea as Mount Corydallus, opposite to the island of Salamis. In this long chain of Parnes (which can only be avoided by going up to the northern coast at Oropus, and passing into Bœotia close by the sea), there are three passes or lower points, one far to the north—that by Dekeleia, where the present king has his country palace, but where of old Alcibiades planted the Spartan garrison which tormented and ruined the farmers of Attica. This pass leads you out to Tanagra in Bœotia. Next to the south, some miles nearer, is the even more famous pass of Phylæ, from which Thrasybulus

and his brave fellows recovered Athens and its liberty. This pass, when you reach its summit, looks into the northern point of the Thriasian plain, and also into the wilder regions of Cithæron, which border Bœotia. The third pass, and the lowest—but a few miles beyond the groves of Academe—is the pass of Daphne, which was the high road to Eleusis, along which the sacred processions passed in the times of the mysteries; and in this pass we still see the numerous niches in which native tablets had been set in by the worshippers at a famous temple to Aphrodite.

On this side of Attica also, with the exception of the Thriasian plain and of Eleusis, there extends outside Mount Parnes a wild mountainous district, quite Alpine in character, which severs Attica from Bœotia, not by a single row of mountains, or by a single pass, but by a succession of glens and defiles, which at once explain to the classical student, when he sees them, how necessary and fundamental were the divisions of Greece into its separate districts, and how completely different in character the inhabitants of each were sure to be. The way from Attica into Bœotia was no ordinary high road, nor even a pass over one mountain, but a series of glens and valleys and defiles, at any of which a hostile army could be stopped, and each of which severed the country on either side by a difficult obstacle. This truly Alpine nature of Greece is only felt when we see it, and yet must ever be

kept before the mind in estimating the character and energy of the race. But let us return to our view from the Acropolis.

If we turn and look southward, we see a broken country, with several low hills between us and the sea—hills tolerably well cultivated, and when I saw them in May, all coloured with golden stubbles, for the corn had just been reaped. But all the plain in every direction seems dry and dusty; arid, too, and not rich alluvial soil, like the plains of Bœotia. Then Thucydides' words come back to us, when he says Attica was 'undisturbed on account of the lightness of its soil' (ἀστασιαστὸς οὖσα διὰ τὸ λεπτογέων) as early invaders rather looked out for richer pastures. This reflection, too, of Thucydides applies equally to the mountains of Attica round Athens, which are not covered with rich grass and dense shrubs, like Helicon, like Parnassus, like the hills of Arcadia, but seem so bare, that we wonder where the bees of Hymettus can find food for their famous honey. It is only when the traveller ascends the rocky slopes of the mountain that he finds its rugged surface carpeted with quantities of little wild flowers, too insignificant to give the slightest colour to the mountain, but sufficient for the bees which are still making their honey as of old. This honey of Hymettus, which was our daily food at Athens, is now not very remarkable either for colour or flavour. It is very dark, and not by any means so good as the honey produced in other

parts of Greece—not to say on the heather hills of Scotland and Ireland. I tasted honey at Thebes and at Corinth which was much better, especially that of Corinth made in the hills towards Cleonæ, where the whole country is scented with thyme, and where thousands of bees are buzzing eagerly through the summer air. But when the old Athenians are found talking so much about honey, we must not forget that sugar was almost unknown to them, and that all their sweetmeats depended upon honey exclusively. Hence the culture and use of it assumed an importance not easily understood among moderns, who are in possession of the sugar-cane.

But amid all the dusty and bare features of the view, the eye fastens with delight on one great broad band of dark green, which, starting from the left side of Pentelicus, close to Mount Parnes in the north, sweeps straight down the valley, passing about two miles to the west of Athens, and reaching to the Peiræus. This is the plain of the Cephissus, and these are the famous olive woods which contain within them the deme Colonus, so celebrated by Sophocles, and the groves of Academe, at their nearest point to the city. The dust of Athens, and the bareness of the plain, make no walks about the town agreeable, save either the ascent of Lycabettus, or a ramble into these olive woods. The river Cephissus, which waters them, is a respectable, though narrow river, even in

summer discharging a good deal of water, and often dividing itself into trenches and arms which are very convenient for irrigation. So there is a strip of country, fully ten miles long, and perhaps two wide on the average, which affords delicious shade and greenness and the song of birds, instead of hot sunlight and dust and the shrill clamour of the tettix without.

I wandered a whole day in these delightful woods, listening to the nightingales, which in the deep shade and solitude sing all day, as if it were but a prolonged twilight, and hearing the plane tree whispering to the elm, as Aristophanes has it, and seeing the white poplar show its silvery leaves in the breeze, and wondering whether the huge old olive stems, so like the old pollared stumps in Windsor Forest, could be the actual sacred trees, the μορίαι, under which the youth of Athens ran their races. The banks of the Cephissus, too, are lined with great reeds, and other marsh plants, which stoop over into its sandy shallows, and wave idly in the current of its stream. The ouzel and the kingfisher start from under one's feet, and bright fish move out lazily from their sunny bay into the deeper pool. The wood is intersected by a few roads, and by many paths, along which it is easy and pleasant to walk. Now and then through a vista the Acropolis shows itself in a frame work of green foliage, nor do I know any more enchanting view of that great ruin.

All the ground under the dense olive trees was covered with standing corn, for here, as in Southern Italy, the shade of trees seems no hindrance to the ripening of the ear. But there was here thicker wood than in Italian corn-fields; on the other hand there was not that rich festooning of vines which spread from tree to tree, and which give a Neapolitan summer landscape so peculiar a charm. A few homesteads there were along the roads, and even at one of the bridges a children's school, full of those beautiful fair children, whose heads remind one so strongly of the old Greek statues. But all the houses were walled in, and many of them seemed solitary and deserted. The fear of rapine and violence is still there. I was told, indeed, by a famous Athenian professor, that no country in Europe was so secure, and I confess I found it so myself in my wanderings; but when he added as his decisive reason, that for *two full years* no bandit had been seen or heard of through the country, I could not help feeling that the desert state of the land, and the general feeling of insecurity, however irrational and absurd in his eyes, was not surprising.

For even apart from bandits, the old spirit of autonomy, or independence, seems to assert itself by men doing what seems right in their own eyes, without interference on the part of police or government. Thus on the very day of which I am speaking, we went and sat on the hillock of Colonus, looking

with wonder at the noble view of Athens which the very slight elevation affords, and desirous to see not only the spot which Sophocles so loved, but now also the resting-place of two eminent men, who sacrificed their lives to their enthusiasm for Greek art and archæology. As we read the pompous inscriptions which the Greek nation has set up to Otfried Müller and Charles Lenormant, we saw with surprise that all the marble was spotted with marks of shot and of bullets. Many edges were, of course, chipped off, and altogether the monuments looked as if they had been subject to a recent bombardment. They were merely convenient targets for the neighbouring peasants, all of whom carry arms, and feel obliged to practise the use of them. Still worse, we were suddenly called to by a number of labourers with pickaxes, whom we had hardly noticed, but who could now be seen running with all their might away from the slope of the hill close to us. Imitating their example without knowing why, we presently saw a blast explode within ten yards of the tombs. Earth and stones were thrown high into the air, and fell all over them. The workmen were blasting away the rock for building stones, and had already come to the very verge of the summit. Such are the modern custodians of all the precious art of their great ancestors! No doubt, as has often happened in older days, not only the rock beneath, but the marble slabs and their inscriptions, will soon be

built into some vulgar wall, and their modern Greek may yet some day, when rediscovered, give rise to bad reflections and worse theories among whatever people are the most learned pedants of that future age.

There is no other excursion in the immediate vicinity of Athens of any like beauty or interest. The older buildings in the Peiræus are completely gone. No trace of the docks or the *deigma* remains; and the splendid walls, built as Thucydides tells us with cutstone, without mortar or mud, and fastened with clamps of iron fixed with lead—this splendid structure has been almost completely destroyed. We can find, indeed, elsewhere in Attica—at Phylæ—still better at Eleutheræ—specimens of this sort of building, but at the Peiræus there are only foundations remaining.

A drive to the open roadstead of Phalerum is more repaying. It is interesting here to observe how the Athenians passed by the nearest sea, and even an open and clear roadstead, in order to join their city to the better harbour, and more defensible headland of Peiræus. Phalĕrum, as they now call it, though they spell it with an η, is the favourite bathing-place of modern Athens, and is about a mile and a-half nearer the city than Peiræus. The water is shallow, and the beach of fine sand, so that for ancient ships, which I suppose drew little water, it was a convenient landing-place, especially for the disembarking of troops, who could choose

their place anywhere around a large crescent, and actually for land fighting, if necessary. But the walls of Athens, the long walls to Peiræus, and its lofty fortifications, made this roadstead of no use to the enemy, so long as Athens held the command of the sea, and could send out ships from the secure little harbours of Zea and Munychia, which almost face Phalerum on the east side of the headland of Peiræus. There was originally a third wall, too, to the east side of the Phaleric bay, but this seems to have been early abandoned when the second long wall, or middle wall as it was originally called, was completed.

At the opening of the Peloponnesian war, it appears that the Athenians defended against the Lacedæmonians, not the two long walls which run close together and parallel to Peiræus, but the northern of these, and the far distant Phaleric wall. It cannot but strike any observer as extraordinary how the Athenians should undertake such an enormous task. Had the enemy attacked anywhere suddenly and with vigour, it seems hard to understand how they could have kept him out. According to Thucydides' accurate detail[1] the wall to Phalerum was nearly 4 miles, that to Peiræus 4½. There were in addition 5 miles of city wall, and nearly 3 of Peiræus wall. That is to say, there were about 17 miles of wall to be protected. This is not

[1] II., 13.

all. This circuit was not closed, but separated by about 2 miles of beach between Peiræus and Phalerum, so that the defenders of the two extremities could in no way promptly assist each other. Thucydides tells us that a garrison of 16,000 inferior soldiers, old men, boys and *metics*, sufficed to do this work. We are forced to conclude that not only were the means of attacking walls curiously incomplete, but even the dash and enterprise of modern warfare cannot have been understood by the Greeks. For we never hear of even a bold attempt on this absurdly straggling fortification, far less of any successful attempt to force it.[1]

But it is time that we should leave the environs of Athens, and wander out beyond the borders of the Athenian plain into the wilder outlying parts of the land. Attica is after all a large country, if one does not apply railway measures to it. We think 30 miles by rail very little, but 30 miles by road is a long distance, and implies land enough to support a large population, and to maintain many flourishing towns. We can wander 30 miles from Athens through Attica in several directions—to Eleutheræ, on the western Bœotian frontier; to Oropus, on the north; and Sunium, on the south. Thus it is only when one endeavours to know Attica minutely

[1] The reader who desires to see the best poetical picture of modern Athens should consult the tenth chapter in Mr. Symonds' *Sketches in Italy and Greece*—one of the most beautiful productions of that charming poet in prose.

that one finds how much there is to be seen, and how long a time is required to see it. And fortunately enough, there is one expedition, and that not the least important, where we can avoid the rough paths, and rougher saddles, of the country, and coast in a steamer along a district at all times obscure in history, and seldom known for anything except for being the road to Sunium. Strabo gives a list of the demes along this seaboard[1], and seems only able to write one fact about them—a line from an old oracle in the days of the Persian war, which prophesied that 'the women of Colias will roast their corn with oars,'[2] alluding to the wrecks driven on shore here by the north-west wind from Salamis. Even the numerous little islands along this coast were in his day, as they now are, perfectly barren. Yet with all its desolation it is exceedingly picturesque and varied in outline.

We took ship in the little steamer belonging to the Sunium Mining Company, who have built a village called Ergasteria, between Thorikos and the promontory, and who were obliging enough to allow us to sail in the boat intended for their private traffic. We left the Peiræus on one of those peculiarly Greek mornings, with a blue sky and very bright sun, but with an east wind so strong and clear, so λαμπρός, as the old Greeks would say, that

[1] IX., § 1, p. 244 (Tauchn.)

[2] He reads, however, φρίξουσι instead of Herodotus' φρύξουσι.

the sea was driven into long white crests, and the fishing-boats were heeling over under their sails. These fresh and strong winds, which are constantly blowing in Greece, save the people very much from the bad effects of a very hot southern climate. Even when the temperature is high, the weather is seldom sultry; and upon the sea, which intrudes everywhere, one can always find a cool and refreshing atmosphere. The Greeks seem not the least to fear these high winds, which are perfectly steady, and seldom turn to squalls. The smallest boats are to be seen scudding along on great journeys from one island to another—often with a single occupant, who sits holding the helm with one hand, and the stern sheet with the other. All the boats in the Peiræus are managed in this way, and you may see their great sails, like seagulls' wings, leaning over in the gale, and the spray dashing from the vessel's prow. We met a few larger vessels coming up from Syra, but on the whole the sea was well nigh as desert as the coast, so much so that the faithful dog, which was on board each of those boats, thought it his serious duty to stand up on the taffrail and bark at us as a strange and doubtful company.

So, after passing many natural harbours, and spacious bays, many rocky headlands and bluff islands—but all desert and abandoned by track of man, we approached the famous cape, from which the white pillars of the lofty old temple gleamed

brilliantly in the sun. They were the first and only white marble pillars which I saw in Greece. Elsewhere, dust and age, if not the hand of man, have coloured that splendid material with a dull golden hue; but here the sea breeze, while eating away much of the surface, has not soiled them with its fresh brine, and so they still remain of the colour which they had when they were set up. We should fain conjecture that here, at all events, the Greeks had not applied the usual blue and red to decorate this marvellous temple; that—for the delight and benefit of the sailors, who hailed it from afar, as the first sign of Attica—its brilliant white colour was left to it, to render it a brighter beacon and a clearer object in twilight and in mist. I will not yet describe it, for we paid it a special visit, and must speak of it in greater detail; but even now, when we coasted round the headland, and looked up to its noble pillars, standing far aloft into the sky, it struck us with the most intense interest. It was easy, indeed, to see how Byron's poetic mind was here inspired with some of his noblest lines.

When we turned from it seaward, we saw stretched out in *échelon* that chain of Cyclades, which are but a prolongation of the headland—Keos, Kyphnos, Seriphos, Siphnos, and, in the far distance, Melos—Melos, the scene of Athens' violence and cruelty, when she filled up, in the mind of the old historian, the full measure of her iniquity. And as we turned northward, the long island, or

islet, of Helene, which stretches along the point, like Hydra off that of Argolis, could not hide from us the mountain ranges of Eubœa, still touched here and there with snow. A short run against the wind brought us to the port of Ergasteria, marked very strangely in the landscape by the smoke of its chimneys—the port where the present produce of the mines of Laurium is prepared and shipped for Scotland.

Here, at last, we found ourselves again among men; 3000 operatives, many of them with families, make quite a busy town of Ergasteria. And I could not but contrast their bold and independent looks, rough and savage as they seemed, with what must have been the appearance of the droves of slaves which worked the mines in old days. We were rowed ashore from our steamer by two persons called Aristides and Epaminondas, but I cannot say that their looks betokened either the justice of the one or the culture of the other.

We found ourselves when we landed in an awkward predicament. The last English engineer remaining in the Mining Company, at whose invitation we had ventured into this wild district, had suddenly left that morning for Athens. His house was shut up, and we were left friendless and alone among 3000 of these Aristides' and Epaminondas', whose appearance was, as I have said, anything but reassuring. We did what was best to meet the difficulty, and what was not only the best thing to do,

but the only thing, and which turned out very well indeed. We went to the director of the mines, M. Markopoulos, a very polished gentleman, with a charming wife, both of whom spoke French excellently. We stated our case, and demanded hospitality for the night. Nothing could be more friendly than our reception. This benevolent man and his wife took us into their own house, prepared rooms for us, and promised to let us see all the curiosities of the country. Thus our misfortune became, in fact, a very good fortune. The night, however, it must be confessed, was spent in a very unequal conflict with mosquitoes and other disturbers of human rest—an inconvenience which our good hostess in vain endeavoured to obviate by burning a strong-smelling powder in our room, and shutting all the windows. But had the remedy been even successful it is very doubtful whether it was not worse than the disease.

We started in the morning by a special train—for the company have a private line from the coast up to the mines—to ascend the wooded and hilly country into the region so celebrated of old as one of the main sources of Athenian wealth. As the train wound its way round the somewhat steep ascent, our prospect over the sea and its islands became larger and more varied. The wild rocks and forests of southern Eubœa—one of the few districts in Greece which seems to have been as savage and deserted in old days as it is now—detached them-

selves from the intervening island of Helena. We were told that wild boars were still to be found there. In the hills about Laurium the hares, which Xenophon so loved to hunt, and turtle doves, seemed the only game attainable. All the hills were covered with stunted underwood.

The mines of Laurium appear very suddenly in Attic history, but from that time onward are a prominent fact in the wealth of the Athenians. We know that in Solon's day there was great scarcity of money, and that he was obliged to depreciate the value of the coinage—a very solitary and unprecedented measure, never repeated; for, all through later history, Attic silver was so good that it circulated at a premium in foreign parts, just as English money now does. Accordingly, in Solon's time we hear no mention of this great, and almost inexhaustible, source of national wealth. So all through the reign of the Peisistratids there is a like silence. Suddenly, after the liberation of Athens, we hear of Themistocles persuading the people to apply the very large revenue from these mines to the building of a fleet for the purpose of the war with Ægina. This sudden appearance in history of the mines must evidently be due to the scantiness of our information. The so-called Xenophon *On the Attic Revenues*—a tract which is almost altogether about these mines—knew quite well that they had been worked from remote antiquity; and there can be, in my mind, no doubt whatever, that here, as elsewhere in Greece,

the Phœnicians had been the forerunners of the natives in the art of mining. Here, as in Thasos, I believe the Phœnicians had their settlements; and possibly a closer survey of the great underground passages, which are still there, may give us some proof by inscriptions or otherwise.

But what happened after the Semitic traders had been expelled from Greek waters?—for expelled they were, though, perhaps, far later from some remote and unexplored points than we usually imagine. I suppose that when this took place, Athens was by no means in a condition to think about prosecuting trade at Sunium. Salamis, which was far closer, and a more obvious possession, was only conquered, in Solon's day, after a long and tedious struggle, and I am perfectly certain that the Athenians could have had no power to hold an outlying dependency, separated by thirty miles of the roughest mountain country, when they had not subdued an island, scarcely a mile from the Thriasian Plain, and not ten miles from Athens. I take it, then, that the so-called *συνοικισμός*, or unifying of Athens, in pre-historic times, by Theseus, or whoever did it, was not a cementing of all Attica, including these remote corners, but only of the settlements about the plains of Attica, Marathon, and Eleusis; and that the southern end of the peninsula was not included in the Athens of early days. It was, in fact, only accessible by a carefully constructed artificial road, such as we hear of after-

wards, or by sea. The Athenians had not either of these means at so early a period. And it is not a little remarkable that the first mention of their ownership of the silver mines is associated with the building of a fleet to contend with Ægina. I have no doubt that Themistocles' advice has been preserved without his reasons for it. He persuaded the Athenians to surrender their surplus revenue from Laurium, to build ships against the Æginetans, simply because they found that without ships the Æginetans would be practically sole possessors of the mines. They were far closer to Laurium by sea than Athens was by land—closer, indeed, in every way—and I am led to suspect that in the days before Solon the mines had been worked by Ægina, and not by Athens. I cannot here enter into my full reasons, but I fancy that Peisistratus and his sons—not by conquest, but by some agreement—got practical possession of the mines, and were, perhaps, the first to make all Attica really subject to the power of Athens.[1] But no sooner are they expelled, than the Æginetans renew their attacks or claims on Laurium; and it is only the Athenian fleet which secures to Athens its possession. We hear of proceedings of Hippias about coinage,[2] which are stated by Aristotle as speci-

[1] It is possible that in the days of Eretria's greatness, when she ruled over a number of the Cyclades, Eretrians may have worked the mines. These occupants probably preceded the Æginetans.

[2] Arist. *Œcon.*, II. 4.

mens of injustice, or sharp practice, and which may have something to do with the acquisition of the silver mines by his dynasty. But I must cut short this serious dissertation.

Our special train brought us up slowly round wooded heights, and through rich green brakes, into a lonely country, from which glimpses of the sea could, however, still be seen, and glimpses of blue islands between the hills. And so we came to the settlements of the modern miners. The great company, whose guests we were, had been started some years ago, by French and Italian speculators, and Professor Ansted had been there as geologist for some years. But the jealousy of the Greeks, when they found out that profit was rewarding foreign enterprise, caused unjust legislation against the company, and, to avoid being plundered, they gladly sold their interest to a native company. At present this company is still thriving; and I saw in the harbour a large vessel from Glasgow, which had come to carry the lead, when prepared in blocks, to Scotland—all the produce being still bought by a single English firm. But I have no doubt that the dog-in-the-manger spirit of the modern Greeks will spoil this trade also. They cannot bear other people to profit by their country, though they are as yet unable to profit by it themselves.

When the Greeks discuss these negotiations about the mines, they put quite a different colour on the affair. They say that the French and Italians

desired to evade fair payment for the ground-rent of the mines, trusting to the strength of their respective governments, and the weakness of Greece. The company's policy is described in Greece as an overreaching, unscrupulous attempt to make great profits by sharp bargains with the natives, who did not know the value of their property. A great number of obscure details are adduced in favour of their arguments, and it seemed to me that the Greeks are really convinced of their truth. In such a matter it would be unfair to decide without stating both sides; and I am quite prepared to change my present conviction that the Greeks were most to blame, if proper reasons can be adduced. But the legislative acts passed in their Parliament look very ugly indeed at first sight.

The present Laurium Company never enter the mines at all, but gather the great mass of scoriæ, which the old Athenians threw out after smelting, with more imperfect furnaces, and less heat than ours. These scoriæ, which look like stone cinders, have been so long there that some vegetation has at last grown over them, and the traveller does not suspect that all the soil around was raised and altered by the hand of man. Owing to the power of steam, and their railway, the present miners carry down the scoriæ in trucks to the sea-coast, to Ergasteria, and there smelt them. The old Athenians had their furnaces in the middle of the mountains, where many of them are still to be seen. They sought

chiefly for silver, whereas the modern company are chiefly in pursuit of lead, and obtain but little silver from the scoriæ.

In many places you come upon the openings of the old pits, which went far into the bowels of the mountains, through miles of underground galleries and passages. Our engine-driver—an intelligent Frenchman—stopped the train to show us one of these entrances, which went down almost straight, with good steps still remaining, into the earth. He assured us that the other extremity, which was known, all the passage being open, was some two or three miles distant, at a spot which he showed us from a hill. Hearing that inscriptions were found in these pits, and especially that the name of Nicias had been found there, we were very anxious to descend and inspect them. This was promised to us, for the actual pits are in the hands of another Greek company, who are searching for new veins of silver. But when we arrived at the spot, the officers of the company were unwilling to let us into the pits. The proper overseer was away—intentionally, of course. There were no proper candles; there was no means of obtaining admission: so we were baulked in our inquiry. But we went far enough into the mouth of one of them to see that these pits were on a colossal scale, well arched up, and, I suppose, had we gone far enough, we should have found the old supports, of which the Athenian law was so careful.

The quantity of scoriæ thrown out, which seems now perfectly inexhaustible, is in itself sufficient evidence of the enormous scale on which the old mining was carried on. Thus, we do not in the least wonder at hearing that Nicias had 1000 slaves working in the mines, and that the profits accruing to the state from the fines and head-rents of the mines were very large—on a moderate estimate, £8000 a-year of our money, which meant in those days a great deal more. The author of the tract on 'Athenian Revenue' says that the riches of the mines were perfectly inexhaustible; that only a small part of the silver district had been worked out, though the digging had gone on from time immemorial; and that after innumerable labourers had been employed, the mines always appeared equally rich, so that no limit need be put on the employment of capital. Still he speaks of opening a new shaft as a most risky speculation. His general estimate appears, however, somewhat exaggerated. The writer confesses that the number of labourers was in his day diminishing, and the majority of the proprietors were then beginners; so that there must have been great interruption of work during the Peloponnesian War. In the age of Philip there were loud complaints that the speculations in mining were unsuccessful; and for obtaining silver, at all events, no reasonable prospect seems to have been left. In the first century of our era, Strabo[1]

[1] IX., p. 275.

says that these once celebrated mines were exhausted, that new mining did not pay, and thus people were smelting the poorer ore, and the scoriæ, from which the ancients had imperfectly separated the metal. This is exactly the case now-a-days, unless we are to credit the sudden rumour in the papers (in 1875), that the company now working the pits had come upon a rich treasure of ore and of tools, left behind at some sudden crisis in ancient days. This I consider as not at all unlikely, though, of course, requiring some better evidence than newspapers to be believed.

Our last mention of the place in olden times is that of Pausanias (at the end of the second century, A. D.), who speaks of Laurium, with the addition, that it had once been the seat of the Athenian silver mines!

There is but one more point suggested by these mines, which it is not well to pass over, when we are considering the working of them in ancient times. Nothing is more poisonous than the smoke from lead mines, and for this reason, the people at Ergasteria have built a chimney more than a mile long to the top of a neighbouring hill, where the smoke escapes. Even so, when the wind blows back the smoke, all the vegetation about the village is at once blighted, and there is no greater difficulty than to keep a garden within two or three miles of this chimney. As the Athenians did not take this precaution, we are not surprised

to hear from them frequent notices of the unhealthiness of the district. For, when there were many furnaces, and the smoke was not drawn away by high chimneys, we can hardly conceive life to have been tolerable. What then must have been the condition of the gangs of slaves which Nicias and other respectable and pious Athenians kept in these mines? Two or three allusions give us a hideous insight into this great social sore, which has not been laid bare, because the wild district of Laurium, and the deep mines under its surface, have concealed the facts from the ordinary observer. Nicias, we are told, let out 1000 slaves to Sosias the Thracian, at an obol a day each—the lessee being bound to restore them to him the same *in number*.

The meaning of this frightful contract is only too plain. The yearly rent paid for each slave was about half the full price paid for him in the market. It follows, that if the slave lived for three years, Nicias made a profit of 50 per cent. on his outlay. No doubt, some part of this extraordinary bargain must be explained by the great profits which an experienced miner could make—a fact supported by the tract on the Revenues, which cannot date more than a generation later than the bargain of Nicias. The lessee, too, was under the additional risk from the slaves escaping in time of war, when a hostile army might make a special invasion into the mountain district for the purpose of inflicting a blow on this important part of Athenian reve-

nue. In such cases, it may be presumed, that desperate attempts were made by the slaves to escape; for, although the Athenian slaves generally were the best treated in Greece, and had many holidays, it was very different with the gangs employed by the Thracian taskmaster. We are told that they had 360 working days in the year. This, together with the poison of the atmosphere, tells its tale plainly enough.

And yet Nicias, the capitalist who worked this hideous trade, was the most pious and God-fearing man at Athens. So high was his reputation for integrity and religion, that the people insisted on appointing him again and again to commands for which he was wholly unfit; and when at last he ruined the great Athenian army before Syracuse, and lost his own life, by his extreme devoutness, and his faith in the threats and warnings of the gods—even then the great sceptical historian, who cared for none of these things, condones all his blunders for the sake of his piety and his respectability.

CHAPTER VI.

EXCURSIONS IN ATTICA—SUNIUM—MARATHON—ELEUSIS.

OF course, however, an excursion to Laurium, interesting as it might be, were absurd without visiting the far more famous Sunium—the promontory which had already struck us so much on our sea voyage round the point—the temple which Byron has again hallowed with his immortal verse, and Turner, with his hardly less immortal pencil. So we hired horses on our return from the mines, and set out on a very fine afternoon to ride down some seven or eight miles from Ergasteria to the famous promontory. Our route led over rolling hills, covered with arbutus and stunted firs; along valleys choked with deep, matted grass; by the side of the sea, upon the narrow ledge of broken rocks. Nowhere was there a road, or a vestige of a human habitation, save where the telegraph wire dipped into the sea, pointing the way to the distant Syra. It was late in the day, and the sun was getting low, so we urged our horses to a canter wherever the ground would permit it. But neither the heat

nor the pace could conquer the indefatigable esquire who attended us on foot to show us the way, and hold the horses when we stopped. His speed and endurance made me think of old Phidippides and his run to Sparta; nor, indeed, do any of the feats recorded of the old Greeks, either in swimming or running, appear incredible when we witness the feats that are being performed almost every day by modern muscle and endurance. At last, after a delightful two hours' roaming through the homely solitude, we found ourselves at the foot of the last hill, and over us, standing against the sky, the shining pillars of the ruined temple.

There can be no doubt that the temple of Neptune on Mount Tænarum must have been quite its rival as to position, but the earthquakes of Laconia have made havoc of its treasures, while at Sunium—though some of the drums in the shafts of the pillars have been actually displaced several inches from their fellows above and below, so that the perfect fitting of the old Athenians has come to look like the tottering work of a giant child with marble bricks—in spite of this, thirteen pillars remain,[1] a piece of architrave, and a giant platform of solid blocks; above all, a site not desecrated by modern habitations, where we can sit and think of the great old days, and of the men who set up this great monument at the remotest corner of their land.

[1] Byron, who loved this spot above all others, I think, in Greece, speaks of sixteen as still standing in his day.

The Greeks told us that this temple, that at Ægina, and the Parthenon, are placed exactly at the angles of a great equilateral triangle, with each side about twenty-five or thirty miles long. Our maps will not verify this belief. The distance from Athens to Sunium appears much longer than either of the other lines, nor do we find in antiquity any hint that such a principle was attended to, or that any peculiar virtue was attached to it.

We found the platform nearly complete, built with great square blocks of porous stone, and in some places very high, though in others scarcely raised at all, according to the requirements of the ground. Over it the temple was built, not with the huge blocks which we see at Corinth and in the Parthenon, but still of perfectly white marble, and with that beautifully close fitting, without mortar, rubble, or cement, which characterizes the best and most perfect epoch of Greek architecture. The stone, too, is the finest white marble, and being exposed to no dust on its lonely site, has alone of all temples kept its original colour—if, indeed, it was originally white, and not enriched with divers colours. The earthquake, which has displaced the stones in the middle of the pillars, has tumbled down many large pieces, which can be seen from above scattered all down the slope where they have rolled. But enough still remains to see the plan, and imagine the effect of the whole structure. It is in the usual simple, grand, Doric style, but

lighter in proportions than the older Attic temples; and, being meant for distant effect, was probably not much decorated. Its very site gives it all the ornament any building could possibly require.

It was our good fortune to see it in a splendid sunset, with all the sea a sheet of molten gold, and all the headlands and islands coloured with hazy purple. The mountains of Eubœa, with their promontory of Geræstus, closed the view upon the north-east, but far down into the Ægean reached island after island, as it were striving to prolong a highway to the holy Delos. The ancient Andros, Tenos, Myconos were there, but the eye sought in vain for the home of Apollo's shrine—the smallest, and yet the greatest of the group. The parallel chain, reaching down from Sunium itself, were hidden behind one another, Keos, Kythnus, Seriphos, and Siphnos, but left open to view the distant Melos. Then came a short space of open sea, due south, which alone prevented us from imagining ourselves on some fair and quiet inland lake; and then to the south-west we saw the point of Hydria, the only spot in all Hellas whose recent fame exceeds the report of ancient days. The mountains of Argolis lay behind Ægina, and formed, with their Arcadian neighbours, a solid background, till the eye wandered round to the Acropolis of Corinth, hardly visible in the burning brightness of the sun's decline. And all this splendid expanse of sea and mountain, and bay and cliff, seemed as

utterly deserted as the wildest western coast of Scotland or Ireland. One or two little white sails, speeding in his boat some lonely fisherman, made the solitude, if possible, more speaking and more intense. There are finer views, more extensive, and perhaps even more varied, but none more exquisitely interesting and more melancholy to the student of Ancient Greece.

This great loneliness is a feature that follows the traveller almost everywhere through the country. Many centuries of insecurity, and indeed of violence, have made country life almost impossible, and now that better times have come, the love and knowledge of it are gone. The city Athenian no longer grumbles, as he did in Aristophanes' day, that an invasion has driven him in from the rude plenty and simple luxuries of his farming life, where with his figs and his olives, his raisins and his heady wine, he made holiday before his gods, and roasted his thrush and his chestnuts with his neighbour over the fire. All this is gone. There remains, indeed, the old political lounger, the loafer of the market-place, ever seeking to obtain some shabby maintenance by sycophancy or by bullying. This type is not hard to find in modern Athens, but the old sturdy Acharnian, as well as the rich horse-breeding Alcmæonid, are things of the past. No part of the country of Attica can be considered even moderately cultivated, except a part of the Thriasian plain, and the valley of the Cephissus, reaching

from near Dekeleia to the sea. This latter plain, with its fine olive-woods reaching down across Academus to the region of the old long walls, is fairly covered with corn and grazing cattle, with plane trees and with poplars. But even here many of the homesteads are deserted, and the country seats of the Athenians are often left empty for years, whenever a band of brigands appears in the neighbouring mountains, and threatens the outlying houses with blackmail, if not with bloodier violence.

All these remarks are even more strongly exemplified by the beautiful country which lies between Pentelicus and Hymettus, and which is now covered with forest and brushwood. We passed through this vale one beautiful sunny morning, on our way to visit Marathon. There is, indeed, a road for some miles—the road to the quarries of Pentelicus—but a very different road from what the Athenians must have had. It is now a mere broad track, cut by wheels and hoofs in the sward, and wherever the ruts become too deep, the driver turns aside, and makes a parallel track for his own convenience. In summer days the dust produced by this sort of road is something beyond description, and the soil being very red clay, we have an atmosphere which accounts to some extent for the remarkable colour of the old buildings of Athens. Our way, after turning round the steep Lycabettus, which, like Arthur's seat at Edinburgh, commands

the town close by, passes up the right side of the undulating plain of Attica, with the stony but variegated slopes of Hymettus upon the right, and Pentelicus almost straight ahead. As soon as the suburbs are passed we meet but one or two country seats, surrounded with dark cypress and pepper trees; but outside the dark green is a tall, dazzling, white wall, which gives a peculiarly Oriental character to the landscape. There is cultivation visible when you look to the westward, where the village of Cephissia lies, among the groves which accompany the Cephissus on its course; but up towards Pentelicus, along the track which must once have been crowded with carts, and heavy teams, and shouting drivers, when all the blocks of the Parthenon were being hurried from their quarry to adorn the Acropolis—along this famous track there is hardly a sign of culture. Occasionally, a rough stubble field showed that a little corn had been cut—an occasional station, with a couple of soldiers, shows why more has not been sown. The fear of brigands has paralysed industry, and even driven out the scanty rural population.

It strikes me, when speaking of this road, that the Greek roads cannot have been at all so well constructed as the Roman, many of which are still to be seen in England. Though I went upon the track of many of them, I did not see a single vestige of an old Greek road. There are here and there wretched remains of Turkish roads—rough,

angular stones laid down across the hills, in a close irregular pavement; but of the great builders of the Parthenon, and of Phylæ, of Eleutheræ, and of Eleusis, hardly a patch of road-work has, so far as I know, remained.

The country becomes gradually covered with shrubs, and then with stunted trees—generally old fir-trees, all carved and wounded for the sake of their resin, which is so painfully obtrusive in Greek wine. But in one place there is, by way of change, a picturesque bridge over a rapid rocky-bedded river, which is completely hidden with rich flowering oleanders, and in which we found sundry Attic women, of the baser sort, washing their clothes. The woods in this place were wonderfully rich and scented, and the sound of the turtle doves was heard in the land. Presently we came upon a thickly-wooded corner, which was pointed out to us as the spot where our unfortunate countrymen were captured in 1870, and carried up the slopes of Pentelicus, to be sacrificed to the blundering of the English Minister or the Greek Ministry—I could not decide which—and more certainly to their own chivalry, for while all the captured Greeks escaped during the pursuit, our English gentlemen would not break their parole. These men are now held by the better Greeks to be martyrs for the good of Greece; for the outrage first forced the Government to take really vigorous measures for the safety of the country. The whole band were gradually captured and

executed, till at last Takos, their chief, was caught in Peloponnesus, three or four years ago, and hanged at Athens. So it came that we found the country apparently as safe as Ireland, and required neither escort nor arms, nor, indeed, any precautions whatever.

We had, indeed, a missive from the Greek Prime Minister, which we presented to the Chief Police Officer of each town—a gentleman in the usual scarlet cap and white petticoats, but carrying a great dog-whip as the sign of his office. This custom, strange to say, dates from the days of Aristophanes. But the Prime Minister warned us that, though things were now safe, there was no permanent security. Any revolution in the neighbourhood (such, for example, as that in Herzegovina, which was at that time not yet declared) was sure, he said, to send over the Turkish frontier a number of outlaws or other fugitives, who would support themselves by levying blackmail on the peasantry, and then on travellers. I venture, therefore, to suspect that at the present moment Roumelia may any day become unsafe. We were informed that the Morea, which does not afford an easy escape into Turkey, has been for years perfectly secure, and I have no reason to doubt my informants. So, then, any traveller desirous of seeing the Peloponnesus only—Sparta, Olympia, Mantinea, Argos, Corinth—may count on doing so with safety. Not so the visitor to Thermopylæ, Delphi,

Thebes, Marathon. The Professors of the University with whom I talked were, indeed, of a more sanguine opinion. They did not anticipate any recurrence of the danger: they considered Greece one of the safest and quietest of countries. Yet their argument (above, p. 112) was more amusing than conclusive to me. But in one point they all seemed agreed. It was perfectly certain that the presence of bandits would be at once known at Athens. Why this was so I was not informed, nor whether travellers would be at once informed also. In no case should I therefore advise any friend to go without proper introductions to our amiable and discreet Minister, on whose advice, and on whose advice alone, one should implicitly rely.

So much for the safety of travelling in Greece, which is naturally suggested by the melancholy fate of Mr. Vyner and his friends. But one point more. It is both idle and foolish to imagine that revolvers and daggers are the best protection against Greek bandits, should they re-appear. They never attack where they are visible. The first notice given to the traveller is the sight of twenty or thirty muzzles pointed at him from the covert, with a summons to surrender. Except, therefore, the party be too numerous to be so surrounded and *visé*, so that some could fight, even were others shot—except in such a case, arms are only an additional prize, and a tempting one, for the clephts. It is, indeed, very seldom that the

carrying of arms is to be recommended to any traveller in any country.

As we ascended the long saddle of country which lies between Pentelicus and Hymettus, we came upon a fine olive-wood, with the same enormous stems which we had already wondered at in the groves of Academe. Indeed, some of the stems in this wood were the largest we had seen, and made us think that they may have been there since the days when the olive oil of Attica was one of its most famous products, and its export was even forbidden. Even then there were ancient stumps—μορίαι, as they were called—which were sacred, and which no man who rented or bought the land might remove—a restriction which seems hard to us, but was not so in Greece, where corn grows freely in the shade of trees, and is even habitually planted in orchards. But at all events, these old gnarled, hollowed stumps, with their tufts of branches starting from the pollared trunk, are a really classical feature in the country, and deserve, therefore, a passing notice.

When we had got well between the mountains, a new scene unfolded itself. We began to see the famous old Euripus, with the mountains of Eubœa over against us, and, down to the south, behind Hymettus, stretched a long tract of mountainous and barren country, which never played a prominent part in history, till we reach the extremity of Sunium, but where a conical hill was pointed out to

us as the site of the old deme Brauron, which we hardly recognised under its modern pronunciation of Vravron. It is, indeed, surprising how little of Attica was ever celebrated. Close by the most famous city of the world are reaches of country which are as obscure to us as the wilds of Arcadia; and we may suspect that the shepherds who inhabited the φελλέα, or rocky pastures in the Attic hills, were not much superior to those whom we now meet herding their goats in the same region.

The plain of Marathon, as everybody knows, is a long crescent-shaped strip of land by the shore, surrounded by an amphitheatre of hills, which may be crossed conveniently in three places, but most easily towards the south-west, along the road which we travelled, and which leads directly to Athens. When the Athenians marched through this broad and easy passage, they found that the Persians had landed at the northern extremity of the plain—I suppose, because the water was there sufficiently deep to let them land conveniently. Most of the shore, as you proceed southward, is lined on the seaboard by swamps. The Greek army must have marched northwards, along the spurs of Pentelicus, and taken up their position near the north of the plain. There was evidently much danger that the Persians should force a passage through the village of Marathon, towards the north-west. Had they done this, they might have rounded Pentelicus, and descended the main plain of Attica, from

the valley below Dekeleia. Perhaps, however, this pass was then defended by an outlying fort, or by some defences at Marathon itself. The site of the battle is absolutely fixed by the great mound, upon which was placed a lion, which has been carried off, no one knows when or whither. This mound is exactly an English mile from the steep slope of one of the hills, and about half a mile from the sea at present; nor was there, when I saw it, any difficulty in walking right to the shore, though a river flows out there, which shows, by its sedgy banks and lofty reeds, a tendency to create a marshy tract in rainy weather. But the mound is so placed that, if it marks the centre of the battle, the Athenians must have faced nearly north, and, if they faced the sea eastward, as is commonly stated, this mound must mark the conflict on their left wing. The mound is very large—I suppose thirty feet high, altogether of clay, so far as we could see, and bears traces of having been frequently ransacked in search of antiquities.

Like almost every view in Greece, the prospect from this mound is full of beauty and variety—everywhere broken outlines, everywhere patches of blue sea, everywhere silence and solitude. Byron is so much out of fashion now, and so much more talked about than read—though even that notice of him is fast disappearing—that I will venture to remind the reader of the splendid things he has said of Greece, and especially of this very plain of

Marathon. He was carried away by his enthusiasm to fancy a great future possible for the country, and to believe that its desolation and the low condition of the inhabitants were simply the result of Turkish tyranny, and not of many natural causes, conspiring for twenty centuries. He paints the Greek brigand or pirate as many others have painted the 'noble savage,' with the omission of all his meaner vices. But, in spite of all these faults, who is there who has felt as he the affecting aspects of this beautiful land—the tomb of ancient glory—the home of ancient wisdom—the mother of science, of art, of philosophy, of politics—the champion of liberty—the envy of the Persian and the Roman—the teacher, even still, of modern Europe? It is surely a great loss to our generation, and a bad sign of its culture, that the love of more modern poets has weaned them from the study of one not less great in most respects, but far greater in one at least—in that burning enthusiasm for a national cause, in that red-hot passion for liberty, which, even when misapplied, or wasted upon unworthy objects, is ever one of the noblest and most stirring instincts of higher man.

But Byron may well be excused for raving about the liberty of the Greeks, for truly their old conflict at Marathon, where a few thousand ill-disciplined men repulsed a larger number of still worse disciplined Orientals, without any recondite tactics—perhaps even without any very extraordinary hero-

ism—how is it that this conflict has maintained a celebrity which has not been equalled by all the great battles of the world, from that day down to our own? The courage of the Greeks, as I have elsewhere shown,[1] was not of the first order. Herodotus praises the Athenians in this very battle for being the first Greeks that dared to look the Persians in the face. Their generals all through history seem never to feel sure of victory, and always endeavour to harangue their soldiers into a fury. Instead of advising coolness, they specially incite to rage — ὀργῇ προσμίξωμεν, says one of them in Thucydides—as if any man not in this state would be sure to estimate the danger fully, and run away. It is, indeed, true that the ancient battles were hand to hand, and therefore parallel to our charges of bayonets, which are said to be very seldom carried out by two opposing lines, as one of them almost always gives way before the actual collision takes place. This must often have taken place in Greek battles, for, at Amphipolis, Brasidas in a battle lost seven men; at a battle at Corinth, mentioned by Xenophon—an important battle, too—the slain amounted to eight;[2] and these

[1] *Social Life in Greece*, p. 23.

[2] Xen. *Hell.*, iv., 3, § 1. To cite a parallel in modern history: a writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (July 12, 1876) says: 'I witnessed a battle during the War of Greek Independence. It lasted three days; the quantity of ammunition expended was enormous, and the result was one man wounded!'.

battles were fought before the days when whole armies were composed of mercenaries, who spared one another, as Ordericus Vitalis says, 'for the love of God, and out of good feeling for the fraternity of arms.' So, then, the loss of 192 Athenians, including some distinguished men, was rather a severe one. As to the loss of the Persians, I so totally disbelieve the Greek accounts of such things, that it is better to pass it by in silence.

Perhaps most readers will be astonished to hear of the Athenian army as undisciplined, and of the science of war as undeveloped, in those times. Yet I firmly believe this was so. The accounts of battles by almost all the historians are so utterly vague, and so childishly conventional, that it is evident these gentlemen were not only quite ignorant of the science of war, but could not easily find anyone to explain it to them. We know that the Spartans—the most admired of all Greek warriors, were chiefly so admired because they devised the system of subordinating officers to one another within the same detachment, like our gradation from colonel to corporal. So orders were passed down from officer to officer, instead of being bawled out by a herald to a whole army. But this superiority of the Spartans, who were really disciplined, and went into battle coolly, like brave men, certainly did not extend to strategy, but was merely a question of better drill. As soon as any real strategist met them, they were helpless. Thus

Iphicrates, when he devised Wellington's plan of meeting their attacking column in line, and using missiles, succeeded against them, even without firearms. Thus Epaminondas, when he devised Napoleon's plan of massing troops on a single point, while keeping his enemy's line occupied, defeated them without any considerable struggle. As for that general's great battle of Mantinea, which seems really to have been introduced by some complicated strategical movements, it is a mere hopeless jumble in our historians. But these men were in the distant future when the battle of Marathon was being fought.

Yet what signifies all this criticism? In spite of all scepticism, in spite of all contempt, the battle of Marathon, whether badly or well fought, and the troops at Marathon, whether well or ill-trained, will ever be more famous than any other battle or army, however important or gigantic its dimensions. Even in this very war, the battles of Salamis and Platæa were vastly more important and more hotly contested. The losses were greater, the results were more enduring, yet thousands have heard of Marathon to whom the other names are unknown. So much for literary ability—so much for the power of talking well about one's deeds. Marathon was fought by Athenians; the Athenians eclipsed the other Greeks as far as the other Greeks eclipsed the rest of the world, in literary power. This battle became the literary property of the city,

hymned by poet, cited by orator, told by aged nurse, lisped by stammering infant; and so it has taken its position, above all criticism, as one of the great decisive battles which assured the liberty of the West against Oriental despotism.

The plain in the present day is quite bare of trees, and, as Colonel Leake observed, appears to have been so at the time of the battle, from the vague account of its evolutions. There is a little corn, and a few other crops about the great tumulus; and along the seashore, whither we went to bathe, there was a large herd of cows and oxen—a sight not very usual in Greece. When we rushed into the shallow blue water, striving to reach swimming depth, we could not but think of the scene when Cynægeirus and his companions rushed in armed to stop the embarkation of the Persians. On the shore then teeming with ships of war, with transports, with fighting and flying men, there was now no sign of life, but we in the water, and the lazy cattle and their silent herdsman looking upon us in wonder; for it was only May, though very hot, and the modern Greek never thinks it safe to bathe till the end of June at least—in this like his Italian neighbour. There was not a single ship or boat in the straits; there was no sign of life or of population on the coast of Eubœa. There was everywhere that solitude which so much struck Byron, as it strikes every intelligent traveller in Modern Greece. There was not even the child or

beggar, with coins and pieces of pottery, who is so troublesome about Italian ruins, and who has even lately appeared at the Parthenon, the theatre of Argos, and a few other places in Greece. We asked the herdsman for remnants of arms or pieces of money: he had seen such things picked up, but knew nothing of their value. Lord Byron tells us he was offered the purchase of the whole plain (six miles by two) for about £900. It would have been a fine speculation for an antiquarian: but I am surprised, as he was, rather at the greatness than at the smallness of the price. The Greek government would probably now give the fee-simple to anyone who would pay the ordinary taxes on property, which were not, I was told, very heavy. But still the jealousy of the nation would not tolerate a foreign speculator.

I have already spoken (p. 108) of the position of the pass of Daphne, and how it leads the traveller over the ridge which separates the plain of the Cephissus from the Thriasian plain. I have also spoken at length of the country about the Cephissus, with its olive woods and its nightingales. When we go through the pass of Daphne—a gentle and easy ascent on both sides—a perfectly new view opens before us. We see under us the Thriasian plain, well covered with ripening corn and other crops; we see at the far side of the crescent-shaped bay the remains of Eleusis. Behind it, and

all round to the right up to where we stand, is an amphitheatre of hills—the spurs of Mount Parnes, which from Phylæ reach due south down to where we stand, and due west on the inland of the Thriasian plain, till they meet, and are confounded with, the slopes of Cithæron, which reach for miles away behind Eleusis. On the sea-side, to our left, lies the island of Salamis, so near the coast that the sea seems a calm inland lake, lying tortuously between the hills.

Many points of Greek history become plain to us by this view. We see how true was the epithet 'rocky Salamis,' for the island, though it looks very insignificant on our maps, contains lofty mountains, with very bare and rocky sides. We begin to see how the island was equally *convenient* (as the Irish say) to both Megara and Attica, if we consider that Eleusis was strictly a part of Attica. The harbour of the Peiræus, for example, would be quite useless if an enemy were watching it from Salamis. But we also come to see the sense of the old legend, that Eleusis had originally a separate king or government from Athens, and that the two cities once carried on war against each other. The towns are but a few miles apart; but their respective plains are so distinctly and completely separated by the pass of Daphne, that not one acre of the territory of Eleusis can be seen from Athens, nor of Athens from Eleusis. So also, lastly, we come to feel how natural is the remark

of Thucydides, that the population of Athens, when the Lacedæmonians invaded Attica, and came no farther than the Thriasian plain, did not feel the terrors of a hostile invasion, as the enemy was not in sight; but when he crossed the pass, and began to ravage Acharnæ, and the vale of the Cephissus, then indeed, though Eleusis was just as near, and just as much their own, they first felt the horrors of the invasion, and were for the first time deeply dejected. This is a good example of that combined farness and nearness which is so characteristic about most neighbouring cities in Greece.

The wretched modern village of Eleusis is picturesquely situated near the sea, on the old site, and there are still to be seen the ruins, not only of the famous temple of Demeter, but also of the Propylæa, built apparently in imitation of those of Mnesicles on the Acropolis at Athens, though the site of both temple and Propylæa are at Eleusis low, and in no way striking.

These celebrated ruins are wretchedly defaced. Not a column or a wall is now standing, and we can see nothing but vast fragments of pillars and capitals, and a great pavement, all of white marble, along which the ancient wheel-tracks are distinctly visible. There are also under-ground vaults of small dimensions, which, the people tell you, were intended for the Mysteries. We that know what vast crowds attended there will not give credence to this ignorant guess; and indeed we learn from

distinct evidence that the great ceremony took place in a large building specially constructed for the purpose. The necessary darkness was obtained by performing the more solemn rites at night; not by going down beneath the surface of the earth.

It is, of course, the celebrated Mysteries—the *Greater Eleusinia*, as they were called—which give to the now wretched village of Eleusis, with its hopeless ruins, so deep an interest. This wonderful feast, handed down from the remotest antiquity, maintained its august splendour all through the greater ages of Greek history, down to the times of decay and trifling—when everything else in the country had become mean and contemptible. Even Cicero, who was of the initiated himself, and a man of wide culture, and of a sceptical turn of mind—even Cicero speaks of it as *the* great product of the culture of Athens. 'Much that is excellent and divine,' says he,[1] 'does Athens seem to me to have produced and added to our life, but nothing better than those Mysteries, by which we are formed and moulded from a rude and savage life to humanity; and indeed in the Mysteries we perceive the real principles of life, and learn not only to live happily, but to die with a fairer hope.' These are the words of a man writing, as I have said, in the days of the ruin and prostration of Greece. Can we then wonder at the enthusiastic language of the Homeric Hymn,[2] of Pindar,[3] of Sophocles,[4] of Aris-

[1] *De Legg.*, II. 14, § 36. [2] *in Cer.* v. 480. [3] *Thren.* [4] O. C. 1042.

tophanes,[1] of Plato,[2] of Isocrates,[3] of Chrysippus? Every manner of writer—religious poet, worldly poet, sceptical philosopher, orator—all are of one mind about this, far the greatest of all the religious festivals of Greece.

To what did it owe this transcendent character? It was not because it worshipped exceptional gods, for the worship of Demeter and Cora was an old and widely diffused cult all over Greece; and there were other Eleusinia in various places. It was not because the ceremony consisted of mysteries, of hidden acts and words, which it was impious to reveal, and which the initiated alone might know. For the habit of secret worship was practised in every state, where special clans were charged with the care of special secret services, which no man else might know. Nay, even within the ordinary homes of the Greeks there were these Mysteries. Neither was it because of the splendour of the temple and its appointments, which never equalled the Panathenæa at the Parthenon, or the splendours of Delphi, or Olympia. There is only one reasonable cause, and it is that which all our serious authorities agree upon—the doctrine taught in the Mysteries was a faith which revealed to them hopeful things about the world to come, and which not so much as a condition, but as a consequence, of this clearer light, this higher faith, made them better citizens and

[1] *Ran.* 455. [2] *Phæd.* cc. 29, 30. [3] *Paneg.* § 6.

better men. This faith was taught them in the Mysteries through symbols,[1] through prayer and fasting, through wild rejoicings; but, as Aristotle expressly tells us, it was reached not by intellectual persuasion, but by a change into a new moral state—in fact, by being spiritually revived.

Here, then, we have the strangest and most striking analogy to our religion in the Greek mythology, for here we have a higher faith publicly taught—any man might present himself to be initiated—and taught, not in opposition to the popular creed, but merely by deepening it, and showing to the ordinary worldling its spiritual power. The belief in the Goddess Demeter and her daughter, the queen of the nether world, was, as I have said, common all over Greece; but even as now-a-days we are told that there may be two kinds of belief of the same truths—one of the head and another of the heart—just as the most excellent man of the world, who believes all the creeds of the Church, is called an unbeliever, in the higher sense, by our Evangelical Christians: so the ordinary Greek, though he prayed and offered at the Temple of Demeter, was held by the initiated at the Mysteries to be wallowing in the mire of ignorance, and stum-

[1] There seems no doubt that some of these symbols, derived from old nature-worship, were very gross, and quite inconsistent with modern notions of religion. But even these were features hallowed and ennobled by the spirit of the celebrants, whose reverence blinded their eyes, while lifting up their hearts.

bling in the night of gloom—he was held to live without real light, and to die without hope, and in despair.

The very fact that it was not lawful to divulge the mystery has prevented the many writers who knew it from giving us any description from which we might gain a clear idea of this wonderful rite. We have hints of various sacred vessels, of various priests known by special technical names; of dramatic representations of the rape of Cora, and of the grief of her mother; of her complaints before Zeus, and the final reconciliation. We hear of scenes of darkness and fear, in which the hopeless state of the unbelievers was portrayed; of light and glory, to which the convert attained, when at last his eyes were opened to the knowledge of good and evil.

But all these things are fragmentary glimpses, as are also the doctrines hinted of the Unity of God, and of atonement by sacrifice. There remains nothing clear and certain, but the unanimous verdict as to the greatness, the majesty, and the awe of the services, and as to the great spiritual knowledge and comfort which they conveyed. The consciousness of guilt was not, indeed, first taught by them, but was felt generally, and felt very keenly by the Greek mind. These Mysteries were its Gospel of reconciliation with the offended gods.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM ATHENS TO THEBES—THE PASSES OF MOUNT CITHÆRON, ELEUTHERÆ, PLATÆA.

No ordinary student, looking at the map of Attica and Bœotia, can realize the profound and complete separation between these two countries. Except at the very north extremity, where the fortified town of Oropus guarded an easy boundary, all the frontier consists, not merely of steep mountains, but of parallel and intersecting ridges and gorges, which contain indeed a few Alpine valleys, such as that of Œnoe, but which are, as a rule, wild and barren, easily defensible by a few against many, and totally unfit for the site of any considerable town, or any advanced culture. As I before stated, the traveller can pass through by Dekeleia, or he can pass most directly by Phylæ, the fort which Thrasybulus seized, when he desired to reconquer Athens with his democratic exiles. The historians usually tell us 'that he seized *and fortified* Phylæ,' a statement which the present remains seem to render very doubtful, indeed. It is quite impossible that the great hill-fort of the very finest Attic building, which

is now shown, and admired by all, could have been 'knocked up' by Thrasybulus and his exiles. The careful construction and the enormous extent of the building compel us to suppose it the work of a rich state, and of a deliberate plan of fortification. It seems very unlikely, for these reasons, that it was built after the days of Thrasybulus, or that so important a point of attack should have been left unguarded in the greater days of Athens. I am therefore convinced that the fort, being built long before, and being, in fact, one of the well-known fortified demes through Attica, had been to some extent dismantled, or allowed to fall into decay, at the end of the Peloponnesian War, but that its solid structure made it a matter of very little labour for the exiles to render it very strong and easily defensible.

This is one of the numerous instances in which a single glance at the locality sets right an historical statement that has eluded suspicion for ages. The fort of Phylæ, like that of Eleutheræ, of which I shall speak, and like those of Messene and of Orchomenus, is built of square blocks of stone, carefully cut, and laid together without a particle of rubble or cement, but so well fitted as to be able to resist the wear of ages better than almost any other building. I was informed by M. Émile Burnouf, that in the case of a fort at Megara, which I did not see, there are even polygonal blocks, of which the irregular and varying

angles are fitted with such precision that it is difficult, as in the case of the Parthenon, to detect the joinings of the stones. The blocks are by no means so colossal in these buildings as in the great ruins about Mycenæ; but the fitting is closer, and the sites on which we find them very lofty, and with precipitous ascents. This style of building is specially mentioned by Thucydides (I. 93) as being employed in the building of the walls of the Peiræus in the days of Themistocles, apparently in contrast to the rude and hurried construction of the city walls. But he speaks of the great stones being not only cut square, but fastened with clamps of iron soldered with lead. I am not aware that any traces of this are found in the remaining hill-forts. The walls of the Peiræus have, unfortunately, long since almost totally disappeared.

We did not pass into Bœotia by the way of Phylæ, preferring to take the longer route through Eleusis. But no sooner had we left Eleusis than we began to ascend into the rough country, which is the preface to the wild mountain passes of Cithæron. It is, indeed, very difficult to find where one range of mountains begins and another ends anywhere throughout Greece. There is generally one high peak, which marks a whole chain or system of mountains, and after which the system is called; but all closer specification seems lost, on account of the immense number of ridges and points which crowd upon the view in all directions. Thus the

chain of Parnes, after throwing out a spur towards the south, which divides the Athenian and the Thriasian plains, sweeps round the latter in a sort of amphitheatre, and joins the system of Cithæron, which extends almost parallel with Parnes. A simple look on a map tells these things better than any description. The only thing which must be specially enforced is, that all the region where a plain is not expressly named is made up of broken mountain ridges and rocky defiles, so that it may fairly be called an Alpine country. A fellow-traveller, who had just been in Norway, was perpetually struck with its resemblance to the Norwegian highlands. These things bring home to us the separation of the old Greek territories in a way which is hardly enforced in our histories.

I will only mention one other fact which points in the same direction. We have a river Cephissus in the plain of Athens. As soon as we cross the pass of Daphne we have another Cephissus in the Thriasian plain. Within a day's journey, or nearly so, we have another Cephissus, losing itself in the lake Copais, not far from Orchomenus. This repetition of the same name shows how little intercourse people have in the country, how little they travel, and how there is no danger of confusing these identical names. This fact, trifling as it is, illustrates very powerfully the isolation which the Greek mountains produce.

There is a good road from Athens to Thebes—a

very unusual thing in Greece, and we were able to drive with four horses, after a fashion which would have seemed very splendid in old days. But, strange to say, the old Greek fashion of driving four horses abreast, two being yoked to the pole, and two outriggers, or παράσειροι, as they were called, has disappeared from Greece, whereas it still survives in southern Italy. On the other hand, the Greeks are more daring drivers than the Italians, being indeed braver in all respects, and when a road is to be had, a very fast pace is generally kept up.

As usual, the country was covered with brushwood, and with numbers of old gnarled fir-trees, which bore everywhere upon their stems the great wounds of the hatchet, made to extract the resin for the flavouring of wine. Rare flocks of goats, with their peculiar, dull, tinkling bells—bells which have the same make and tone all through Calabria, through Sicily, and through Greece—were the only sign of human occupation or of population. But when you look for houses, there is nothing in the shape of wall or roof, save an occasional station, where, but a few years since, soldiers were living to keep the road safe from bandits. At last we came upon the camp of some shepherds—a thing reminding one far more of a gipsy camp than anything else—a few dark-brown skins falling over two upright poles, so as to form a roof-shaped tent, of which the entrance looked so absolutely black as to form

quite a patch in the landscape. There is mere room for lying in these tents by night, and, I suppose, in the summer weather most of the shepherds will not condescend even to this shelter.

After some hours' drive, we reached a grassy dell, shaded by large plane-trees, where a lonely little public-house—if I may so call it—of this construction invited us to stop for watering the horses, and inspecting more closely the owner. There was the usual supply of such places—red and white wine in small casks, excellent fresh water, and *lucumia*, or Turkish delight. Not only had the owner his belt full of knives and pistols, but there was hanging up, in a sort of rack, a most picturesque collection of swords and guns—all made in Turkish fashion, with ornamented handles and stocks, and looking as if they might be more dangerous for the sportsman than for his game. While we were being served by this wild-looking man, in this suspicious place—in fact, it looked like the daily resort of bandits—his wife, a comely young woman, dressed in the usual dull blue, red, and white, disappeared through the back way, and hid herself among the trees. This fear of being seen by strangers—no doubt caused by jealousy among men, and, possibly, by a low moral tone in the country—is a striking feature through most parts of Greece. It is said to be a remnant of the Turkish influence, but seems to me to lie deeper, and to be even an echo of the old Greek days. The same feeling

seems prevalent in most parts of Sicily. In the towns there you seldom see ladies in the streets; and in the evenings, except when the play-going public is returning from the theatre, there are only men to be seen.

After leaving this resting-place, about eleven in the morning, we did not meet a single house or village till we had crossed Cithæron, after six in the evening, and descried the modern hamlet of Platæa on the slopes to our left. But once or twice through the day a string of four or five mules, with bright richly striped rugs over their wooden saddles, and still brighter dressed men, sitting lady-fashion on them, were seen treading their way along the winding road. The tinkling of the mules' bells, and the wild Turkish chaunts of the men, were a welcome break in the uniform stillness of the road. The way becomes gradually wilder and steeper, though often descending to cross a shady valley, which opens to the right and left, in a long, narrow vista, and shows blue far-off hills of other mountain chains. One of these valleys was pointed out to us as Œnoe, an outlying deme of Attica, fortified in Periclean days, and which the Peloponnesian army attacked, as Thucydides tells us, and failed to take, on their invasion of Attica at the opening of the war. There are two or three strong square towns in the valley, close to the road, but not the least like an old Greek fort, and quite incapable of holding any garrison. The site is utterly unsuitable for an ancient fort,

and there seemed no remains of any walled town.

These facts led me to reflect upon the narration of Thucydides, who evidently speaks of Œnoe as the border fort of Attica, and yet says not a word about Eleutheræ, which is really the border, the great fort, and the key to the passes of Cithæron. The first solution which suggests itself is, that the modern Greeks have given the wrong names to these places, and that by Œnoe, Thucydides really means the place now known as Eleutheræ.[1] Most decidedly, if the fort which is now there existed at the opening of the Peloponnesian War, he cannot possibly have overlooked it in his military history of the campaign. And yet it seems almost certain that we must place the building of this fort at the epoch of Athens' greatness, when Attic influence was paramount in Bœotia, and when the Athenians could, at their leisure, and without hindrance, construct this fort, which commands the passes into Attica, before they diverge into various valleys, about the region of the so-called Œnoe.

For, starting from Thebes, the slope of Cithæron is a single, unbroken ascent up to the ridge, through which there is a cut, nearly over the village of Platæa, which naturally indicates the pass. But when the traveller has ascended from Thebes to this point, he finds a steep descent into a mountainous and broken

[1] Colonel Leake already felt these difficulties, and moves Eleutheræ a few miles to the south-west.

region, where he must presently choose between a gorge to the right or to the left, and must wander about zig-zag among mountains, so as to find his way towards Athens. And although I did not examine all the passes accurately, it was perfectly obvious that, as soon as the first defile was passed, an invader could find various ways of eluding the defenders of Attica, and making his way into the Thriasian plain, or by Phylæ, into that of Athens. Accordingly, the Athenians chose a position of remarkable strength, just inside the last crowning ascent, where all the ways converge to pass the crest of the mountain into Platæa. Here a huge rock strives, as it were, to bar the descending path, by interposing between the mountains on either side, so that the path divides like a torrent bed, and passes on either side, close under the walls of the fort which covers the top of the rock. From this point the summit of the pass is about two or three miles distant, and easily visible, so that an outpost there, commanding a view of the whole Theban plain, could signal any approach to the fort with ample notice.

Looking backward into Attica, the whole mountainous tract of Œnoe is visible, and, though we cannot now tell the points actually selected, there can be no difficulty in finding several which could pass the signal from Eleutheræ to Phylæ or Daphne, and thence to Athens. We know that fire signals were commonly used among the Greeks, and we can here see an instance where news could

be telegraphed some thirty miles over a very difficult country in a few moments. Meanwhile, as succours might be some time arriving, the fort was of such a size and strength as to hold a large garrison, and stop any army which could not afford to mask it, by leaving there a considerable force.[1]

The site was, of course, an old one, and the name Eleutheræ, if correctly applied to this fort, points to a time when some mountain tribe maintained its independence here against the governments on either side in the plain, and hence the place was called the '*Free*' place. There is further evidence of this in a small, irregular fort which occupies a place almost in the centre of the larger and later enclosure. This older fort is of polygonal masonry, very inferior to the other, and has fallen into ruins, while the later walls and towers are in many places perfect. The outer wall follows the nature of the position, the principle being to find everywhere a precipitous descent from the fortification, so that an assault must be very difficult. On the north side, where the rock is precipitous, the wall runs along in a right line; whereas on the south side, over the modern road, it dips down the hill, and makes a semicircular sweep, so as to crown the steepest part of a gentler ascent. Thus the whole enclosure is of a half-moon shape. But, while the straight wall is almost perfect, the curved side has in many places fallen to pieces. The building is

[1] This the Peloponnesians did at Œnoe, according to Thucydides; perhaps therefore at this very place.

the most perfect I have ever seen of the kind, made of square hewn stones, evidently quarried on the rock itself. The preserved wall is about 200 yards long, and 6½ feet wide, apparently not more than 10 or 12 feet high; but, at intervals of 25 or 30 yards, there are seven towers twice as deep as the wall, and the path along the battlement goes right through them. Each tower has a doorway on the outside of it, and close beside this there is also a doorway in the wall, somewhat larger. These doorways are for the most part absolutely perfect, made by a huge lintel, about 7½ feet long, laid over an aperture in the building, with its edges very smoothly and carefully cut. As I could see no sign of door-posts or bolts—a feature still noticeable in all the temple gates—it is evident that wooden doors and door-posts were fitted into these doorways—a dangerous thing to do, were not the entrances strongly protected by the towers close beside them and over them. There were staircases, leading from the top of the wall outwards, beside some of the towers. The whole fort is of such a size as to hold not merely a garrison, but also the flocks and herds of the neighbouring shepherds, in case of a sudden and dangerous invasion, and this, no doubt, was the primary intention of all the older forts in Greece and elsewhere.[1]

[1] There was no photograph of this splendid building existing when I was in Greece. The only drawing of it I have seen is in the plates of Dodwell's *Archæological Tour in Greece*—a splendid book.

The day was, as usual, very hot and fine, and the hills were of that beautiful purple blue which Mr. Leighton so well understands in the backgrounds of his Greek pictures; but a soft breeze brought occasional clouds across the sun, and varied the landscape with deeper hues. Above us on each side were the noble crags of Cithæron, with their grey rocks and their gnarled fir-trees. Far below, a bright mountain stream was rushing beside the pass into Attica; around us were the great walls of the old Greeks, laid together with that symmetry, that beauty, and that strength which marks all their work. The massive towers are now defending a barren rock; the enclosure which had seen so many days of war and rapine was lying open and deserted; the whole population was gone long centuries ago. There is still liberty there, and there is peace—but the liberty and the peace of solitude.

A short drive from Eleutheræ brought us to the top of the pass,[1] and we suddenly came upon one of those views in Greece which, when we think of them, leave us in doubt whether the instruction they give us, or the delight, is the greater. The whole plain of Thebes, and, beyond the intervening ridge, the plain of Orchomenus, with its

[1] This pass (seized by the Persian cavalry before the battle of Platæa, in order to stop the Greek provision trains) was called τρεῖς κεφαλαί by the Thebans, but δρυὸς κεφ. by the Athenians (Herod. IX. 39)—evidently the same old name diversely interpreted by diverse *Volksetymologien*.

shining lake, were spread out before us. The sites of all the famous towns were easily recognisable. Platæa only was straight beneath us, on the slopes of the mountain, and as yet hidden by them. The plan of all Bœotia unfolded itself with great distinctness—two great plains, separated by a low ridge, and surrounded on all sides by chains of mountains. On the north there are the rocky hills which hem in Lake Copais from the Eubœan strait, and which nature had pierced before the days of history, aided by Minyan engineers, whose *καταβόθρα*, as they were called, were tunnelled drains, which drew water from thousands of acres of the richest land. On the west, where we stood, was the gloomy Cithæron—the home of awful mythical crimes, and of wild Bacchanalian orgies, the theme of many a splendid poem and many a striking tragedy. To the south lay the pointed peaks of Helicon—a mountain (or mountain chain) full of sweetness and light, with many silver streams coursing down its sides to water the Bœotian plains, and with its dells the home of the Muses, as long since as the bard of Ascra—the home, too, of Eros, who was honoured in Thespiæ, long after the reality of the faith had decayed, by the crowd of visitors who went up to see the famous statue of the god by Praxiteles. This Helicon separates Bœotia from the southern sea, but does not close up completely with Cithæron, leaving way for an army coming from the isthmus,

where Leuctra stood to guard the entrance. Over against us, on the west, lay, piled one over another, the dark, wild mountains of Phocis, with the giant Parnassus raising its snow-clad shoulders above the rest. But, in the far distance, snowy points in Ætolia stood out in rivalry, and show us that Parnassus is but the advanced guard of the wild Alpine country, which even in Greece proved too rugged a nurse for culture.

We made our descent at full gallop down the windings of the road—a most risky drive; but the coachman was daring and impatient, and we felt, in spite of the danger, that peculiar delight which accompanies the excitement of going at headlong pace. Above our heads were wheeling great vultures—huge birds, almost black, with lean, featherless heads—which added to the wildness of the scene. After this rapid descent, we came upon the site of Platæa, marked by a modern village of the name, on our left, and below us we saw the winding Asopus, and the great site of one of the most famous of all Greek battles—the battle of Platæa. This little town is situated much higher up the mountain than I had thought, and a glance showed us its invaluable position as an outpost of Athenian power towards Bœotia. With the top of the pass within an hour's walk, the Platæans could, from their streets, see every movement over the Theban plain: they could see an invasion from the south coming up by Leuctra; they could see troops marching northward

towards Tanagra and Œnophyta. They could even see into the Theban Cadmeia, which lay far below them, and then telegraph from the top of the pass to Eleutheræ, and from thence to Athens. We can, therefore, understand at once Platæa's importance to Athens, and why the Athenians built a strong fortified post on their very frontier, within easy reach of it.

All the sites of the great battle are well marked and well known, the fountain Gargaphia, the so-called island, and the Asopus, flowing lazily in a deep-cut, sedgy channel, in most places far too deep to ford. Over our heads were still circling the great black vultures; but, as we neared the plain, we met in addition a great black-and-white eagle, which we had not seen in Attica. There is some cultivation from Platæa to Thebes, but strangely alternated with wilderness. We were told that the people have plenty of spare land, and, not caring to labour for its artificial improvement, till a piece of ground once, and then let it lie fallow for a season or two. The natural richness of the Bœotian soil thus supplies them with ample crops. But it is strange to think how impossible it is, even in these rich and favoured plains, to induce a fuller population.

The question of the depopulation of Greece is no new one—it is not due to the Slave inroads—it is not due to Turkish misrule. As soon as the political liberties of Greece vanished, so that the national

talent found no scope in local government—as soon as the riches of Asia were opened to Greek enterprise—the population diminished with wonderful rapidity. All the later Greek travellers are agreed about the fact. 'The whole of Greece could not put in the field,' says one, 'as many soldiers as came of old from a single city.' 'Of all the famous cities of Bœotia,' says another, 'but two—Thespiæ and Tanagra—now remain.' The rest are mostly described as ruins (ἐρείπια). No doubt, every young, enterprising fellow went off to Asia as a soldier or a merchant; and this taste of emigrating has remained strong in the race till the present day, when most of the business of Constantinople, of Smyrna, and of Alexandria, is in the hands of Greeks. But, in addition to this, the race itself seems at a certain period to have become less prolific, and this, too, is a remarkable feature lasting to our own time. In the many hospitable houses in which I was entertained through the country I sought in vain for children. The young married ladies had their mothers to keep them company, and this was a common habit; the daughter does not willingly separate from her mother. But, whether by curious coincidence or not, the absence of children in these seven or eight houses was very remarkable.

The evening saw us entering into Thebes—the town of all others which retains the smallest vestiges of antiquity. Even the site of the Cadmeia is

not easily distinguishable. Two or three hillocks in and about the town are all equally insignificant, and all equally suitable, one should think, for a fortress The discovery of the old foundations of the walls has, however, determined the matter, and settled the site to be that of the highest part of the present town. Its strength, which was celebrated, must then have been due almost altogether to artificial fortification, for though the old city was in a deeper valley to the north-west, yet from the other side there can never have been any ascent steep enough to be a natural rampart. The old city was, no doubt, always more celebrated for eating and drinking than for art or architecture, and its momentary supremacy under Epaminondas was too busy and short a season to be employed in such pursuits. But, besides all this, and besides all the ruin of Alexander's fury, the place has been visited several times with the most destructive earthquakes, from the last of which (in 1852) it has not even now recovered. There are still through the streets houses torn open, and walls shaken down; there are gaps made by ruins, and half-restored shops. Thus the antiquities of Thebes consist of a few inscribed slabs and fragments, which are as usual collected in a dark out-house, where it is not easy to make them out. I was not at the trouble of reading these inscriptions, for in this department the antiquarians of the University of Athens are really very zealous and competent,

and I doubt whether any inscription now discovered fails to come into the Greek papers within a few months. From these they of course pass into the *Corpus Inscriptionum Græcarum*, a collection daily increasing, and often re-edited. I may observe that, not only for manners and customs, but even for history, these undeniable and seldom suspicious sources are rapidly becoming our surest and even fullest source.

In the opinion of the inhabitants, by far the most important thing about the town is the tomb of the Evangelist S. Luke, which is situated in a chapel close by. The stone is polished and worn with the feet and lips of pilgrims, and all such homes of long devotion are in themselves interesting; but it seems odd that the Evangelist should have his tomb established in a place so absolutely decayed and depopulated as was the region of Thebes, even in his day. The tombs of the early preachers and missionaries are more likely to be in the thickest of thoroughfares, amid the noise and strife of men.

Thebes is remarkable for its excellent supply of water. Apart from the fountain Dirce, several other great springs rise in the higher ground close to it, and are led by old Greek conduits of marble to the town. One of these springs was large enough to allow us to bathe—a most refreshing change after the long and hot carriage drive, especially in the ice-cold water, as it came from its deep hiding place. We returned at eight in the

evening to dine with our excellent host—a host provided for us by telegraph from Athens—where we had ample opportunity of noticing some of the peculiarities of modern Greek life.

The general elections were just pending. M. Boulgaris had just *échoué*, as the French say; and the King, after a crisis in which a rupture of the Constitution had been expected, decided to try a constitutional experiment, and called to office M. Trikoupes, an advanced Radical, who had been prosecuted but a year ago for writing strong articles against His Majesty in the Athenian daily press. M. Trikoupes, withal, in spite of his pen, is a highly educated and reasonable man, well acquainted with England and English politics, and apparently anxious to govern by strictly constitutional means. Our new friend at Thebes was the Radical candidate, and was at the very time of our arrival canvassing his constituency. Every idle and low fellow in the town seemed to think it his duty to come up into his drawing-room, in which we were resting, and sit down to encourage him and advise him. No hint that he was engaged in entertaining strangers had the smallest effect; and so garlic and dirt were inflicted upon us till the welcome announcement of dinner, to which, for a wonder, his constituents did not follow him. He told me that though all the country were strongly in favour of M. Trikoupes, yet he could hardly count upon a majority with certainty, for he had

determined to let the elections follow their own course, and not control them with soldiers. For in this most constitutional country, with their freedom, as usual, closely imitated from England, soldiers stood, up to the summer of 1875, round the booths, and hustled out anyone who did not come to vote for the Ministerial candidate. M. Trikoupes refused to take this reasonable precaution, and, as the result showed, lost his sure majority.

But when I was there, and before the actual elections had taken place, the Radical party were very confident. They were not only to come in triumphant, but their first act was to be the prosecution of the late Prime Minister, M. Boulgaris, for violating the Constitution, and his condemnation to hard labour, with confiscation of his property. I used to plead the poor man's case earnestly with these hot-headed politicians, by way of amusement, and was highly edified by their arguments. The ladies, as usual, were by far the fiercest, and were ready, like their goddess of old, to eat raw the flesh of their enemies. I used to ask them whether it would not be quite out of taste if Mr. Disraeli, now in power, were to prosecute Mr. Gladstone for violating the Constitution in his Irish Church Act, and have him condemned to hard labour. The cases, they replied, were quite different. No Englishman could ever attain, or even understand, the rascality of the late Greek Minister. Feeling that there might be some force in

this argument, I changed ground, and asked them were they not afraid that if he were persecuted in so violent a way, he might, instead of occupying the Opposition benches, betake himself to occupy the mountain passes, and by robbing a few English travellers, so discredit the new government as to be worse and more dangerous in opposition than in power. No, they said, he will not do that; he is *too rich*. But, said I, if you confiscate his property, he will be poor. True, they replied; but still he will not be able to do it: he is *too old*. It seemed as if the idea that he might be too respectable never crossed their minds.[1] What was my surprise to hear within six months that this dreadful culprit had come into power again at the head of a considerable majority!

We were afterwards informed that many of the Greek politicians are paupers, who will not dig, and to beg they are ashamed; and so they sit about the *cafés* of Athens on the look-out for one of the 10,000 places which have been devised for the patronage of the Ministry. But, as there are some 30,000 expectants, it follows that the 20,000 disappointed are always at work seeking to turn out the 10,000. Hence a crisis every three months;

[1] I trust none will imagine that I intend the least disrespect to M. Boulgaris, who is, according to far better authority than that quoted in the text, an honourable and estimable man. But some of his Ministers have been since convicted of malpractices concerning certain archbishoprics, which were bought for money. The trial is now a matter of history, to which an allusion is sufficient.

hence a Greek ambassador can hardly reach his destination before he is recalled; hence, too, the exodus of all thrifty and hard-working men to Smyrna, to Alexandria, or to Manchester, where their energies are not wasted in perpetual political squabbling. The greatest misconduct with which a man in office can be charged is the holding of it for any length of time; the whole public then join against him, and cry out that it is high time for him, after so long an innings, to make way for some one else.

How long, how long, is Europe to persist in the ridiculous blunder of offering the British Constitution to scarce emancipated slaves! When will we learn from the old Greeks, what the new Greeks so clearly illustrate, that most nations are by nature children, and are best and happiest when governed despotically by civilised men! For in our day, too, there are *politically* childish races, though possessing other high and noble qualities; but all their virtue, all their usefulness is destroyed if we allow them the opportunity of conducting their own affairs. This wise despotism of King Otho concealed from Europe for a generation the absurdity she had committed in setting up Greece suddenly as a free kingdom. Since his exile it has become plain enough.[1]

[1] It seems hardly possible that these remarks should not give offence, for the people to whom they apply are *ex hypothesi* no judges of the larger question of national liberty, and all feel an inborn right to per-

We left Thebes very glad that we had seen it, but not very curious to see it again. Its site makes it obviously the natural capital of the rich plain around it; and we can also see at once how the larger and richer plain of Orchomenus is separated from it by a distinct saddle of rising ground, and was naturally, in old times, the seat of a separate power. But the separation between the two districts, which is not even so steep or well marked as the easy pass of Daphne between Athens and Eleusis, makes it also clear that the owners of either plain would certainly cast the eye of desire upon the possessions of their neighbours, and so at an early epoch Orchomenus was subdued. For many reasons this may have been a disaster for Greece. The Minyæ of Orchomenus, as people called the old nobles who settled there in pre-historic days, were a great and rich society, building forts and treasure-houses, and celebrated, even in Homer's day, for wealth and splendour.

But, perhaps owing to this very luxury, they were subdued by the unartistic, vulgar, upstart Thebans, who, during centuries of power and importance, never rise to greatness save through the transcendent genius of Pindar and of Epaminondas. No real greatness ever attached to their town. When peo-

sonal liberty. I can only say to the Greeks that I hold my own nation—the Irish—to be equally unfit for an advanced constitution. Indeed, for centuries to come, most of the world were far happier and safer under an *enlightened* despotism.

ple came from a distance to see art in Bœotia, they came to little Thespiæ, in the southern hills, where the Eros of Praxiteles was the pride of the citizens. Tanagra, too, in the terra cottas of which I have spoken (above, p. 53), shows taste and refinement; and we still look with sympathy upon the strangely modern fashions of these graceful and elegant figures. At Thebes, so far as I know, no trace of fine arts has yet been discovered. The great substructure of the Cadmea, the solid marble water-pipes of their conduits, a few inscriptions—that is all. It corroborates what we find in the middle and new comedy of the Greeks, that Thebes was a place for eating and drinking, a place for other coarse material comforts—but no place for real culture or for art. Even their great poet, Pindar, a poet in whom most critics find all the highest qualities of genius—loftiness, daring, originality—even this great man—possibly from the accidents of his age—worked by the job, and bargained for the payment of his noblest odes.

Thus, even in Pindar, there is something to remind us of his Theban vulgarity; and it is, therefore, all the more wonderful, and all the more freely to be confessed, that in Epaminondas we find not a single flaw or failing, and that he stands out as far the noblest of all the great men whom Greece ever produced. It were possible to maintain that he was also the greatest, but this is a matter of opinion and of argument. Certain it is that his influence made

Thebes, for the moment, not only the leader in Greek politics, but the leader in Greek society. Those of his friends whom we know seem not only patriots, but gentlemen—they cultivated with him music and eloquence, nor did they despise philosophy. So true is it, that in this wonderful peninsula genius seemed possible everywhere, and that from the least cultivated and most vulgar town might arise a man to make all the world about him admire and tremble.

I will make but one more remark about this plain of Bœotia. There is no part of Greece so sadly famed for all the battles with which its soil is stained. The ancients called it Mars' *Orchestra*, or exercising ground; and even now, when all the old life is gone, and when not a hovel remains to mark the site of once well-built towns, we may well ask why were these towns celebrated? Simply because in old Greek history their names served to specify a scene of slaughter, where a campaign, or it may be an empire, was lost or won. Platæa, Leuctra, Haliartus, Coronea, Chæronea, Delium, Œnophyta, Tanagra—these are in history the landmarks of battles, and, with one exception, landmarks of nothing else. Thebes is mainly the nurse of the warriors who fought in these battles, and but little else. So, then, we cannot compare Bœotia to the rich plains of Lombardy—they, too, in their day, aye, and in our own day, Mars' Orchestra—for there literature and art have given fame to cities, while

the battles fought around their walls have been forgotten by the world.

I confess we saw nothing of the foggy atmosphere so often brought up against the climate of Bœotia. And yet it is, of course, more foggy than it was of old, for then the lake Copais was drained, whereas now the old tunnels, cut, or rather enlarged, by the Minyæ, are choked, and thousands of acres of the richest land are covered with marsh and lake. M. Trikoupes, the then Prime Minister, told me that a plan had been proposed which would drain the lake more completely than the old *Catabothra*, and, at the cost of less than one million sterling, bring into permanent cultivation some thousands of acres—in fact, the largest and richest plain in all Greece. I asked him where he meant to find a population to till it, seeing that the present land was about ten times more than sufficient for the inhabitants. He told me that some Greek colonists, who had settled in the north, under the Turks or Servians (I forget which), were desirous of returning to enjoy the sweets of Hellenic liberty. It was proposed to give them the reclaimed tract. If these good people will reason from analogy, they will be slow to trust their fortunes to their old fellow-countrymen. So long as they are indigent they may be unmolested—*cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator*—but as soon as they prosper, or are supposed to prosper, we might have the affair of Laurium repeated. The natives would be up in

arms against the strangers who had come to plunder the land of the wealth intended by nature for others. The Greek Parliament would not fail to make retrospective laws and restrictions, and so all the more active and impatient spirits would leave a country where prosperity implied persecution, and where people only awake to the value of their possessions after they have sold them to others.

I think this Greek jealousy no ordinary feature, but one specially engrained in the texture of their nature from the earliest times. Nothing can be a more striking or cogent proof of this than the way in which Herodotus sets down jealousy as one of the attributes of the Deity. For, the Deities of all nations being conceptions formed after the analogy of human nature around them, there can be no doubt that the honest historian put it down as a necessary factor in the course and constitution of nature. We can only understand Greek history by keeping these things perpetually in mind, and even now it explains the apparent anomaly, how a nation so essentially democratic—who recognise no nobility and no distinctions of rank—can be satisfied with a king of foreign race. They told me themselves, over and over again, that the simple reason was this: no Greek could tolerate another set over him, so that even such an office as President of a Greek Republic would be intolerable, if held by one of themselves. And this same feeling in old

times is the real reason of the deadly hate manifested against the most moderate and humane despots. However able, however kindly, however great such a despot might be; however the state might prosper under him, one thing in him was intolerable—he had no natural right to be superior to his fellows, and yet he was superior. I will not deny the existence of political enthusiasm, and of real patriotism among Greek tyrannicides, but I am quite sure that the universal sympathy of the nation with them was partly based upon this deep-seated feeling.

It is said that, in another curious respect, the old and modern Greeks are very similar—I mean the form which bribery takes in their political struggles. It has been already observed and discussed by Mr. Freeman, how, among the old Greeks, it was the politician who was bribed, and not the constituents; whereas among us in England, the leading politicians are above suspicion, while the constituents are often corruptible enough. Our Theban friend told me that in Modern Greece the ancient form of bribery was still in fashion; and that, except in Hydria and one other place—probably, if I remember rightly, Athens—the bribing of constituents was unknown; while the taking of bribes by Ministers seems not to be very uncommon. Since my return, no less a person than the Minister of cult (religion), and one of his colleagues, have been openly brought into court, and indicted for the sale of three archbishop-

ricks, those of Patras and Corinth among the number. The result of the trial justified the open allegation in court, that these high offices were sold to the highest bidder. As the actual appointment lies, I believe, in the hands of the Synod of Patriarchs, I suppose they are understood to accept the Minister's recommendation. But there is no doubt that this public charge points to a sort of bribery likely to take place in any real democracy, when the men at the head of affairs are not men of great wealth and noble birth, but often ordinary, or even needy persons, selected by ballot, or popular vote, to fill for a very short time a very responsible office.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PLAIN OF ORCHOMENUS, LEBADEA, CHÆRONEA.

THE road from Thebes to Lebadea (Livádia) leads along the foot of Helicon all the way—Helicon, which, like almost all celebrated Greek mountains, is not a summit, but a system of summits, or even a chain. Looking from the plain, the contrast of the dark Cithæron and the gentle sunny Helicon strikes the traveller again and again. After the ridge, or saddle, is passed which separates the plain of Thebes from that of Orchomenus, the richness of the soil increases, but the land becomes very swampy and low, for at every half-mile comes a clear silver river tumbling from the slopes of Helicon on our left, crossing the road, and flowing to swell the waters of Lake Copais—a vast sheet with undefined edges, half marsh, half lake—which has now no outlet to the sea, and which is only kept from covering all the plain by evaporation in the heats of summer. Great fields of sedge and rushes, giant reeds, and marsh plants unknown in colder countries, mark each river-course as it nears the lake; and, as might

be expected in this lonely fen country, all manner of insect life, and all manner of amphibia haunt the sites of ancient culture. Innumerable dragon-flies, of the most brilliant colours, were flying about the reeds, and lighting on the rich blades of grass which lay on the water's surface; and now and then a daring frog would charge boldly at so great a prize, but retire again in fear when the fierce insect dashed against him in its impetuous start. Large land tortoises, with their high-arched shells, yellow and brown, and patterned like the section of a great honeycomb, went lazily along the moist banks, and close by the water which they could not bear to touch. Their cousins of the water, on the other hand, were not solitary in habit, but lay in lines along the sun-baked mud, and at the first approach of danger dropped into the water one after the other with successive flops, looking for all the world like a long row of smooth black pebbles, which had suddenly come to life, like old Deucalion's stones, that they might people this solitude. The sleepy and expressionless faces of these tortoises were a great contrast to the heads of the water-snakes, which were very like them in form, but wonderfully keen and lively in expression. They, too, would glide into the water, when so strange a thing as man came near, but would presently raise their heads above the surface, and eye with wonder and suspicion, and in perfect stillness, the approach of their natural enemy. The

Copaic eels, so celebrated in the Attic comedy as the greatest of all dainties, are also still to be caught; but the bright sun and cloudless sky made vain all my attempts to lure this famous darling of Greek epicures. We noticed that while the shrill cicada, which frequents dry places, was not common here, great emerald-green grasshoppers were flying about spasmodically, with a sound and weight like that of a small bird.

As we passed along, we were shown the sites of Haliartus and Coronea—Haliartus, where the cruel Lysander met his death in a skirmish, and so gave a place in history to an obscure village—Coronea, where the Spartans first learned to taste the temper of the Theban grenadiers, and where King Agesilaus well-nigh followed his great rival to the funeral pyre. As I said before, all these towns are only known by battles. Thespiæ has an independent interest, and so has Ascra. The latter was the birthplace of the earliest known Greek poet of whose personality we can be sure; Thespiæ, with its highly aristocratic society, which would not let a shopkeeper walk their place of assembly for ten years after he had retired from business, was the site of fair temples and statues, and held its place and fame long after all the rest of the surrounding cities had sunk into decay. There are indistinct remains of surrounding walls about both Haliartus and Coronea, but surely nothing that would repay the labour of excavations. All these Bœotian

towns were, of course, fortified, and all of them lay close to the hills, for the swampy plain was unhealthy, and in older days the rising lake was said to have swallowed up towns which had been daringly built close upon its margin. But the supremacy of Orchomenus in older, and Thebes in later days, never allowed these subject towns to attain any importance or any political significance.

After some hours' riding, we suddenly came upon a deep vista in the mountains on our left—such another vista as there is behind Coronea, but narrower, and enclosed on both sides with great and steep mountains. And here we found the cause of the cultivation of the upper plain—here was the town of Lebadea (Livadia), famed of old for the august oracle of Trophonius—in later days the Turkish capital of the province of Roumelia. To this the roads of all the neighbourhood converge, and from this a small force can easily command the deep gorges and high mountain passes which lead through Delphi to the port of Cirrha. Even now there is more life in Livadia than in most Greek towns. All the wool of the country is brought in and sold there, and, with the aid of their great water power, they have a considerable factory, where the wool is spun and woven into stuff. A large and beautifully clear river comes down the gorge above the town—or rather the gorge in which the town lies—and tumbles in great falls between the streets and under the houses, which have

wooden balconies, like Swiss châlets, built over the stream. The whole aspect of the town was not unlike a Swiss town; indeed, all the features of the upland country are ever reminding the traveller of his Swiss experience.

But the people are widely different. It was a great saint's day, and all the streets were crowded with people from many miles round. The women, as is usual in all Greek towns, except Arachova, were not to be seen in any numbers. As among the ancients, they do not walk about the streets except for some special ceremony or amusement. But no women's costume is required to lend brightness to the colouring of the scene; for here every man had his petticoat or kilt of dazzling white, his grey or black embroidered waistcoat, his great white sleeves, and his scarlet fez, with its blue tassel. Nothing can be imagined brighter than a dense crowd in this dress. They were all much excited at the arrival of strangers, and crowded about us without the least idea or care about being thought obtrusive. Every Greek thinks it his right to make what remarks he likes, and what observations he chooses, upon any stranger, and has not the smallest idea of the politeness of reticence on such occasions.

We were received most hospitably by the medical officer of the district, who, as usual, had an amiable young wife, who spoke Greek only, and a lively old mother-in-law, living permanently

in the house, to prevent the young lady from being lonely. Like all the richer Greeks in country parts, they eat nothing till twelve, when they had a sort of early dinner called breakfast, and then dined at half-past eight in the evening. This arrangement gave us more than enough time to look about the towns when our day's ride was over; so we went, first of all, to see the site of Trophonius' oracle. As the gorge becomes narrower, there is, on the right side, a small cave, from which a sacred stream flows to join the larger river. Here numerous square panels, cut into the rock to hold votive tablets, now gone, indicate a sacred place, to which pilgrims came to offer prayers for aid, and thanksgiving for success. The actual seat of the oracle is not certain, and is supposed to be some cave or aperture now covered by the Turkish fort on the rock immediately above; but the whole glen, with its beetling sides, its rushing river, and its cavernous vaulting, seems the very home and preserve of superstition. We followed the windings of the defile, jumping from rock to rock up the river bed, and were soon beyond the observation of all the crowding boys, who, like the boys of any other town, could not satisfy their curiosity at strangeness of face and costume. As we went on for some miles, the country began to open, and to show us a bleak and solitary mountain region, where the chains of Helicon and Parnassus join, and shut out the sea

of Corinth from Bœotia by a great bar some thirty miles wide. Not a sound could be heard in this wild loneliness, save the metallic pipe of a water ouzel by the river, and the scream of hawks about their nests, far up on the face of the cliffs.

As the evening was closing in, we began to retrace our steps, when we saw in two or three places scarlet caps over the rocks, and swarthy faces peering down upon us with signs and shouts. Though nothing could have been more suspicious in such a country, I cannot say that we felt the least uneasiness, as we continued our way without regarding them. They kept watching us from the heights, and when at last we descended nearer to the town, they came and made signs, and spoke very bad Greek, to the effect that they had been out scouring the country for us, and that they had been very uneasy about our safety. This was, indeed, the case; our excellent Greek companion, who felt responsible to the Greek Government for our safety, and who had stayed behind in Livadia to make arrangements, had become so uneasy, that he had sent out the police to scour the country. So we were brought in with triumph by a large escort of idlers and officials, and presently sat down to dinner at the fashionable hour, though in anything but fashionable dress. The entertainment would have been as excellent as even the intentions of our host, had not our attention been foolishly distracted by bugs walking up the table-cloth. It is,

indeed, but a small and ignoble insect, yet it produces a wonderful effect upon the mind; for it inspires the most ordinary man with the gift of prophecy: it carries him away even from the pleasures of a fair repast into the hours of night and mystery, when all his wisdom and all his might will not save him from the organized skirmishing of his desultory foe.

It may be here worth giving a word of encouragement to the sensitive student, whom these hints are apt to deter from venturing into the wilds of Greece. In spite of frequent starvation, both for want of food, and for want of eatable food; in spite of frequent sleeplessness and even severe exercise at night, owing to the excess of insect population; such is the lightness and clearness of the air, such the exhilarating effect of great natural beauty, and of solitary wandering, free and unshackled, across the wild tracts of valley, wood, and mountain, that fatigue is an almost impossible feeling. Eight or ten hours' riding every day, which in other country and other air would have been almost unendurable, was here but the natural exercise which any ordinary man may conveniently take. It cannot be denied that the discomforts of Greek traveling are very great, but with good temper and patience they can all be borne; and when they are over, they form a pleasant feature in the recollections of a glorious time. Besides, these discomforts are only the really classical mode of

traveling. Dionysus, in Aristophanes' *Frogs*, asks, especially about the inns, the very questions which we often put to our guide; and if his slave carried for him not only ordinary baggage, but also his bed and bedding, so now-a-days there are many places where the traveller dare not lie down—I was going to say to rest, except in his own rugs.

The next day was occupied in a tour across the plain to Orchomenus, then to Chæronea, and back to Livadia in the evening, so as to start from thence for the passes to Delphi. Our ride was, as it were, round an isosceles triangle, beginning with the right base angle, going to Orchomenus north-east as the vertex, then to Chæronea at the left base angle, and home again over the high spurs of mountain which protrude into the plain between the two base angles of our triangle. For about a mile as we rode out of Livadia, a wretched road of little rough paving-stones tormented us—the remains of Turkish engineering, when Livadia was their capital. Patches of this work are still to be found in curious isolation over the mountains, to the great distress of both mules and riders; for the stones are very small and pointed, and, where they have been worn smooth, exceedingly slippery. But we soon got away into deep, rich meadows upon the low level of the country adjoining the lake, where we found again the same infinitely various insect life which I have already described. A bright, merry Greek boy, in full dress (for it was again a holiday), fol-

lowed in attendance on each mule or pony, and nothing could be more picturesque than the cavalcade, going in Indian file through the long grass, among the gay wild flowers, especially when some creek or rivulet made our course to wind about, and so brought the long line of figures into more varied grouping. As for the weather, it was so uniformly splendid that we almost forgot to notice it. Indeed, strangers justly remark what large conversation it affords us in Ireland, for there it is a matter of constant uncertainty, and requires forethought and conjecture. While we were in Greece, from the middle of May to near the end of June, there is nothing to be said, except that we saw one heavy shower at Athens, and that the temperature, whenever clouds and breeze both left us, seemed excessively hot.

In two or three hours we arrived at the site of old Orchomenus, of late called Scripou, but now reverting, like all Greek towns, to its original name. There is a mere hamlet, some dozen houses, at the place, which is close to the stone bridge built over the Cephissus—the Bœotian Cephissus—at this place. This river appears to be the main feeder of the Copaic lake, coming down, as we saw it, muddy and cold with snow-water from the heights of Parnassus. It runs very rapidly, like the Iser at Munich, and is about double the size of that river, at Orchomenus. Of the so-called treasure-house of the Minyæ, nothing remains but the stone door-

posts and the huge block lying across them; and even these are almost imbedded in earth. It was the most disappointing ruin I had seen in Greece, for it is always quoted with the treasure-house of Atreus at Mycenæ as one of the great specimens of pre-historic building. It is not so interesting in any sense as the corresponding raths in Ireland. Indeed, but for Pausanias' description, it would, I think, have excited but little attention.

On the hill above are the well-preserved remains of the Acropolis, of which the stones are so regular, and so carefully cut, that it looks at first sight modern, then too good for modern work, but in no case polygonal, or of an age parallel to the so-called treasury. There is a remarkable tower built on the highest point of the hill, with a very perfect staircase up to it. The whole of the work is very like the work of Eleutheræ, and seems to be of the best period of Greek wall-building. Nothing surprises the traveller more in Greece than the number of these splendid hill-forts, or town fortresses, which are never noticed by the historians as anything remarkable—in fact, the art and the habit of fortifying must have been so universal, that it excited no comment. This strikes us all the more when so reticent a writer as Thucydides, who seldom gives us anything but politics, goes out of his way to describe the wall-building of the Peiræus. He evidently contrasts it with the

hurried and irregular construction of the city walls, into which even tombstones were built; but if we did not study the remains still common in Greece, we might imagine that the use of square hewn stones, the absence of mortar and rubble, and the clamping with lead and iron were exceptional, whereas that sort of building is the most usual sort in Greece. The walls of the Peiræus cannot even have been the earliest specimen, for the great portal at Mycenæ, though somewhat rougher and more huge in execution, is on the same principle. The only peculiarity of these walls may have been their height and width, and upon that point it is not easy to get any monumental evidence now. The walls of the Peiræus have disappeared completely, though the foundations are still traceable; others have stood, but perhaps on account of their lesser height.

In a large and hospitable monastery we found the well which Pausanias describes as close beside the shrine of the Graces, and here we partook of breakfast, attended by our muleteers, who always accompany their employer into the reception-room of his host, and sit by at meat, ready to attend, always joining if possible in the conversation at table. Some excellent specimens of old Greek pottery were shown us in the monastery, apparently, though not ostensively, for sale, there being a law prohibiting the sale of antiquities to foreigners, or for exportation. In their

chapel the monks showed us some fragments of marble pillars, and one or two inscriptions—nothing of note or importance.

It was on our way up the valley to Chæronea, along the rapid stream of the Cephissus, that we came, in a little deserted church, upon one of the most remarkable extant specimens of a peculiar epoch in Greek art. As usual, it was set up in the dark, and we were repeatedly obliged to entreat the natives to clear the door, through which alone we could obtain any light to see the work. It is a funeral *stele*, closely similar to the celebrated *stele* and its relief at Athens, which is inscribed as the work of Aristion, and dating from the time of the Persian wars. The work before us is inscribed as the work of Anxenor the Naxian—an artist otherwise unknown to us; but the style and finish is very remarkable, and more perfect than the *stele* of Aristion. It is a relief carved on an upright slab of grey Bœotian marble—I should say about four feet in height, and representing a bearded man wrapped in a cloak, resting on a long stick propped under his arm,[1] and offering a large grasshopper to a dog sitting before him. The hair and beard are conventionally curled, the whole effect being very like an Assyrian relief; but this is the case with all the older Greek sculpture, which evidently started in Ionia by an

[1] Cf. Polygnotus' picture of Agamemnon (Paus. x. 30, 3), σκήπτρῳ τε ὑπὸ τὴν ἀριστερὰν μασχάλην ἐρειδόμενος.

impulse from the far east. The occurrence of the dog, a feature which strikes us frequently in the later Attic tombs, proves what I had long since inferred from stray hints in Greek literature, that dogs among the old Greeks, like the modern, were held in the highest esteem as the friends and companions of man. It is the greatest pity that this splendid and well-preserved monument of early Greek art should lie hidden in so obscure and out-of-the-way a corner of Greece; isolated, too, and with little of antiquarian interest in its immediate neighbourhood. When we were there, it had never yet been photographed, but there were some hopes of its being soon taken by an enterprising young artist, whom we met at work afterwards in the theatre of Argos. The Aristion relief at Athens can be studied in accurate copies.

The great value of these reliefs consists (apart from their artistic value) in their undoubted genuineness. For we know that in later days, both in Greece and Italy, a sort of pre-Raphaelite taste sprung up among amateurs, who admired and preferred the stiff old awkward groping at nature to the perfect symmetry and grace of perfect art. Pausanias, for example, speaks with enthusiasm of these antique statues and carvings, and generally mentions them first, as of most importance. Thus, after describing various archaic works on the Acropolis of Athens, he adds, 'But whoever places works made with artistic skill before those which come under the

designation of archaic, may, if he likes, admire the following.'[1] As a natural result, a fashion came in of imitating them, and we have, especially in Italy, many statues in this style which seem certainly to be modern imitations, and not even Greek copies of old Greek originals. But these imitations are so well done, and so equalized by lapse of centuries to the real antiques, that though there are Germans who profess to distinguish the *archaistic*, as they call it, from the archaic, it is always a very difficult task, and about most of them there is doubt and debate.

But here about Orchomenus, a country which was so decayed as to lose almost all its population two centuries before Christ, where no amateurs of art would stay, and where Plutarch was, as it were, the last remains in his town of literature and respectability—here there is no danger whatever of this spurious work, and thus here, as indeed all through Greece, archaic work is thoroughly trustworthy. But the unfortunate law of the land, which insists upon all these relics, however isolated, being kept in their place of finding, is the mightiest obstacle to the study of this interesting phase of culture, and we must only await the publication of some complete set of photographs, from which we can make reliable observations. The Greeks will tell you that the preservation of antiquities in their original

[1] ὅστις δὲ τὰ σὺν τέχνῃ πεποιημένα ἐπίπροσθε τίθεται τῶν ἐς ἀρχαιότητα ἡκόντων, καὶ τάδε ἐστιν οἱ θεάσασθαι. I. 24, 3.

place, in the first place, gives the inhabitants an interest in them, which may be true, but that there are generally no inhabitants: and next, that it encourages traveling in the country. This also is true; but surely the making of decent roads, and the establishing of decent inns, and some communications, would do infinitely more, and are indeed necessary, before the second stimulus can have its effect.

Not far from this little church and its famous relief, we came in sight of the Acropolis (called Petrarchus) of Chæronea, and soon arrived at the town, so celebrated through all antiquity, in spite of its moderate size. The fort on the rock is, indeed, very large, perhaps the largest we saw in Greece, with the exception of that at Corinth, and, as usual in these buildings, follows the steepest escarpments, raising the natural precipice by a coping of beautifully hewn and fitted square stones. The artificial wall is now not more than four or five feet high, but even so, there are only two or three places where it is at all easy to enter the enclosure, which is fully a mile of straggling outline on the rock. The view from this fort is very interesting. Commanding all the plain of the lake Copais, it also gives a view of the sides of Parnassus, and of the passes into Phocis, which cannot be seen till the traveller reaches this point. Above all, it looks out upon the gap of Elatea, about ten miles north-west, through which the eye catches glimpses of secluded valleys in northern Phocis.

This gap is, indeed, the true key of this side of Bœotia, and is no mere mountain pass, but a narrow plain, perhaps a mile wide, which must have afforded an easy transit for an army. But the mountains on both sides are tolerably steep, and so it was necessary to have a fortified town, as Elatea was, to keep the command of the place. As we gazed through the narrow plain, the famous passage of Demosthenes came home to us, which begins: 'It was evening, and the news came in that Philip had seized, and was fortifying Elatea.' The nearest point of observation or of control was the rock of Chæronea, and we may say with safety, that it was from here the first breathless messenger set out with the terrible news for Thebes and Athens. This, too, was evidently the pass through which Agesilaus came on his return from Asia, and on his way to Coronea, where his great battle was fought, close by the older trophy of the Theban victory over Tolmides.[1]

Having surveyed the view, and fatigued ourselves greatly by our climb in the summer-heat, we descended to the old theatre, cut into the rock where it ascends from the village—the smallest and steepest Greek theatre I had ever seen. Open-air buildings always look small for their size, but most of those built by the Greeks and Romans were so large that nothing could dwarf them. Even the theatre of such a town as Taormina in Sicily—

[1] Cf. Plut. *Agesilaus*, cap. xvii.

which can never have been populous—is, in addition to its enchanting site, a very majestic structure. I will not speak of the immense theatres of Argos and of Syracuse. But this little place at Chæronea, so steep that the spectators sat almost immediately over one another, looked almost amusing when cut in the solid rock, after the manner of its enormous brethren. The guide-book says it is one of the most ancient theatres in Greece, why, I know not. It seems to me rather to have been made when the population was diminishing; and any rudeness which it shows arises rather from economy than want of knowledge.

But, small as it is, there are few more interesting places than the only spot in Chæronea where we can say with certainty that here Plutarch sat—a man who, living in an age of decadence, and in a country village of no importance, has, nevertheless, made his genius felt over all the world as much as any of his countrymen. Apart from the great stores of history brought together in his *Lives*, which, indeed, even now are our only source for the inner life and spirit of the greatest Greeks of the greatest epochs—the moral effect of these splendid biographies, both on poets and politicians through Europe, can hardly be overrated. From Shakespeare and Alfieri to the wild savages of the French Revolution, all kinds of patriots and eager spirits have been excited and delighted by these wonderful portraits. Alfieri

even speaks of them as the great discovery of his life, which he read with tears and with rage. There is no writer of the Silver Age who gives us anything like so much valuable information about earlier authors, and their general character. More especially the inner history of Athens in her best days, the personal features of Pericles, Cimon, Alcibiades, Nicias, as well as of Themistocles and of Aristides, would be completely, or almost completely, lost, if this often despised but invaluable man had not written for our learning. And he is still more essentially a good man—a man better and purer than most Greeks—another Herodotus in fairness and in honesty. A poor man who lived at Howth, and was himself reputed by his neighbours 'a terrible historian,' remarked to a friend of mine, who used to lend him Scott's novels, 'that Scott was a great historian,' and being asked his reason, replied, 'He makes you to love your kind.' There is a deep sense in this vague utterance, and in this sense it may be eminently applied to our dear old Plutarch. 'Here in Chæronea,' says Pausanias, 'they prepare unguents from the flowers of the lily, and the rose, and the narcissus, and iris. These are balm for the pains of men. But that which is made of roses, if even old images made of wood are anointed with it, saves them, too, from decay.' He little knew how eternally true his words would be, for though the rose and the iris grow wild and neglected, and yield not

now their perfume to soothe the ills of men, yet from Chæronea comes the eternal balm of Plutarch's wisdom, to sustain the oppressed, to strengthen the patriot, to purify with nobler pity and terror the dross of human meanness. Nay, even the crumbling images of his gods arrest their decay by the virtue of his morals, and revive their beauty in the sweetness of his simple faith.

There is a rich supply of water, bursting from a beautiful old Greek fountain, near the theatre —indeed, the water supply all over this country is excellent. There is also an old marble throne in the church, about which they have many legends, but no history. The costume of the girls, whom we saw working in small irrigated plots near the houses, was beautiful beyond that in other Greek towns. They wore splendid necklaces of gold and silver coins, which lay like corslets of chain mail on the neck and breast; and the dull but rich embroidery of wool ontheir aprons and bodices was quite beyond what we could describe, but not beyond our highest appreciation.

As the day was waning, we were obliged to leave this most interesting place, and set off again on our ride home to Lebadea. We had not gone a mile from the town when we came upon the most pathetic and striking of all the remains in that country—the famous lion of Chæronea, which the Thebans set up to their countrymen who had fallen in the great battle against Philip of Macedon, in

338 B.C. We had been looking out for this monument, and on our way up to Chæronea, seeing a lofty mound in the plain, rode up to it eagerly, hoping to find the lion. But we were disappointed, and were told that the history of this larger mound was completely unknown. It evidently commemorates some battle, and is a mound over the dead, but whether those slain by Sylla, or those with Tolmides, or those of some other conflict, no man can say. It seems, however, perfectly undisturbed, and grown about with deep weeds and brushwood, so that a hardy excavator might find it worth opening, and, perhaps, coins might tell us of its age.

The mound where we found the lion was much humbler and smaller, in fact hardly a mound at all, but a rising knoll, with its centre hollowed out, and in the hollow the broken pieces of the famous lion. It had sunk, we are told, into its mound of earth, originally intended to raise it above the road beside, and lay there in perfect safety till the present century, when four English travellers claim to have discovered it (June 3, 1818). They tried to get it removed, and failing in their efforts, covered up the pieces carefully.[1] Since that time they seem

[1] An account of the discovery, by the only surviving member of the party, Mr. G. L. Taylor, has been published by Mr. W. S. Vaux in the *Trans. of the Royal Soc. of Lit.*, 2nd series, vol. viii., pp. 1, *sqq.* The latter gentleman called attention to his paper when the subject was being discussed in the *Academy* last year. A very different story was told to Colonel Mure, and has passed from his *Travels* into Murray's *Guide*. The current belief among the Greeks seems still to be that a

to have lain undisturbed, and are still in such a state that a few days' labour, and a few pounds of expense, would restore the work. It is of blueish-grey stone[1]—they call it Bœotian marble or limestone—and is a work of the highest and purest merit. The lion is of that Asiatic type which has little or no mane, and seemed to us couchant or sitting in attitude, with the head not lowered to the fore paws, but thrown up.[2] The expression of the face is ideally perfect — rage, grief, and shame are expressed in it, together with that noble calmness and moderation which characterize all good Greek art. The object of the monument is quite plain without reading the affecting, though simple, notice of Pausanias: 'On the approach to the city,' says he, 'is the tomb of the Bœotians who fell in the battle with Philip. It

Greek patriot called Odysseus, perceiving the stone protruding from the clay, and, on striking it, hearing its hollow ring, dug it out and broke it in pieces, imagining it to be a record of Philip's victory over Hellenic liberty. Some ill-natured people added that he hoped to find treasure within it.

[1] Not white marble, as Mr. Cresy implies, *op. cit.* p. 4. He gives the measurements of some of the pieces, which are enormous, the head alone weighing about three tons.

[2] Mr. Taylor and his friends thought it must have stood in the attitude of the now abolished lion on Northumberland House. This did not appear so to us; but it is difficult to decide. The restoration by Siegel in the *Mon. of the Soc. Arch.* of Rome, for 1856, of which Mr. A. S. Murray most kindly sent me a drawing, makes the posture a *sitting* one, like that of the sitting lion in front of the Arsenal at Venice. The Greeks are now fully alive to the value of this monument, and anxious for its restoration.

has no inscription; but the image of a lion is placed upon it as an emblem of the spirit of these men. The inscription has been omitted—I suppose, because the gods had willed that their fortune should not be equal to their valour.' So, then, we have here, in what may fairly be called a *dated* record, one of the finest specimens of the sepulchral monuments of the best age of Greece. It is very much to be regretted that this splendid figure is not put together and photographed. Nothing would be more instructive than a comparison with the finest of modern monuments—Thorwaldsen's Lion at Lucerne—the work, too, of the only modern sculptor who can for one moment be spoken of in comparison with the old Greeks. But the lion of Chæronea now owes its existence and safety to the accident that no neighbouring peasant has in old time lacked stones for a wall, or for a ditch; and when Europe awoke to a sense of the preciousness of these things, it might have been gone, or dashed into useless fragments.

As we saw it, on a splendid afternoon in June, it lay in perfect repose and oblivion, the fragments large enough to let us see the contour and outline; and in the mouth of the upturned head wild bees were busy at their work, and the honeycomb was there between its teeth. The old Hebrew story came fresh upon us, and we longed for the strength which tore the lion of old, to gather the limbs and heal the rents of his marble fellow.

The lion of Samson was a riddle to the Philistines which they could not solve; and so I suppose this lion of Chæronea was a riddle, too—a deeper riddle to better men—why the patriot should fall before the despot, and the culture of Greece before the Cæsarism of Macedonia. Even within Greece, there is no loss for remarkable parallels. This, the last effulgence of the setting sun of Greek liberty, was commemorated by a lion and a mound, as the opening struggle at Marathon was also marked by a lion and a mound. At Marathon the mound is there and the lion gone—at Chæronea, the lion is there and the mound gone. But, doubtless, the earlier lion was far inferior in expression and in beauty, and was a small object on so large a tomb. Later men made the sepulchre itself of less importance, and the poetic element more prominent; and perhaps this very fact tells the secret of their failure, and why the refined sculptor of the lion was no equal in politics and war to the rude carver of the relief of the Marathonian warrior.

These and such like thoughts throng the mind of him who sits beside this solitary tomb; and it may be said in favour of its remoteness and difficulty of access, that the traveller who does reach it will not rush away to catch a train, or mount a coach, startled by a horn or whistle from his meditations. In solitude there is at least peace and leisure, and the scattered objects of interest are scanned with affection and with care.

CHAPTER IX.

ARACHOVA—DELPHI—THE BAY OF CIRRHA.

THE pilgrim who went of old from Athens to the shrine of Delphi, to consult the great oracle on some great difficulty in his own life, or some great danger to his country, saw before him the giant Parnassus as his goal, as soon as he reached the passes of Cithæron. For two or three days he went across Bœotia with this great landmark before him; but it was not till he reached Lebadea that he found himself leaving level roads, and entering defiles, where great cliffs and narrow glens gave to his mind a tone of superstition and of awe which ever dwelt around that wild and dangerous country. Starting from Lebadea, or, by another road, from Chæronea, he must go about halfway round Parnassus, from its east to its south-west aspect; and this can only be done by threading his way along torrents and precipices, mounting steep ascents, and descending into wild glens. This journey among the Alps of Phocis is perhaps the most beautiful in all Greece.

The old priests of Delphi, who were the first

systematic road-builders among the Greeks, had made a careful way from Thebes into Phocis, for the use of the thronging pilgrims to their shrine. It appears that, by way of saving the expense of paving it all, they laid down or macadamised in some way a double wheel-track or fixed track, upon which chariots could run with safety; but we hear from the oldest times of the unpleasantness of two vehicles meeting on this road, and of the disputes that took place as to which of them should turn aside into the deep mud. We may infer from this that the lot of pedestrians cannot have been very pleasant. Now, all these difficulties have vanished with the road itself. There are nothing but faintly-marked bridle paths, often indicated only by the solitary telegraph wires, which reach over the mountains, apparently for no purpose whatever; and all travellers must ride or walk in single file, if they will not force their way through covert and forest.

These wild mountains do not strike the mind with the painful feeling of desolation which is produced by the abandoned plains. At no time can they have supported a large population, and we may suppose that they never contained more than scattered hamlets of shepherds, living, as they now do, in deep-brown hairy tents of hides at night, and wandering along the glens by day, in charge of great herds of quaint-looking goats with long beards and spiral horns. The dull tink-

ling of their bells, and the eagle's yelp, are the only sounds which give variety to the rushing of the wind through the dark pines, and the falling of the torrent from the rocks. It is a country in which the feeling grows not of solitude, but of smallness—a land of huge form and feature, meet dwelling for mysterious god and gloomy giant, but far too huge for mortal man. I trust I may not be tedious in speaking so much of the landscape in Greece; but if these pages are to be an honest mirror of what may be seen and enjoyed there, it were idle to deny or to avoid the splendid sameness and the splendid solitude of Greek scenery.

Our way lay, not directly for Delphi, but for the curious town of Arachova, which is perched on the summit of precipices, some 4000 feet or more above the level of the sea. We rode from eight in the morning till the evening twilight to reach this place, and all the day through scenes which gave us each moment some new delight and some new astonishment, but which could only be described by a painter, not by any pages of writing, however poetical or picturesque. It is the misfortune of such descriptions on paper, that the writer alone has the remembered image clear before him; no reader can grasp the detail, and frame for himself a parallel picture.

We felt that we were approaching Arachova, when we saw the steep slopes above and below our path planted with vineyards, and here and there

a woman in her gay dress working on the steep incline, where a stumble would have sent her rolling many hundreds of feet into some torrent bed. At one particular spot, where the way turned round a projecting shoulder, we were struck by seeing at the same time, to the north, the blue sea under Eubœa, and, at the south, the Gulf of Corinth where it nears Delphi—both mere patches among the mountains, like the little lakes which one sees among the Irish moors, but both great, historic waters—old highroads of commerce and of culture. From any of the higher summits, such a view from sea to sea would not be the least remarkable; but it was interesting and unusual to see it from a mule's back on one of the highroads of the country. A moment later, the houses of Arachova itself seized all our attention, lying over against us, and quite near, but with a great gulf between us and them, which we were fortunately able to ride round. The town has a curious, scattered appearance, with interrupted streets and uncertain plan, owing not only to the extraordinary nature of the site, but to the fact that huge boulders, I might say rocks, have been shaken loose by earthquakes from above, and have come tumbling into the middle of the town. They crush a house or two, and stand there in the middle of a street. Presently some one comes and builds a house up against the side of this rock; others venture in their turn, and so the town recovers itself, till another earthquake

makes another rent. Since 1870 these earthquakes have been very frequent. At first they were very severe, and ruined almost all the town; but now they are very slight, and so frequent that we were assured that they happened at some hour *every day*. I believe this is practically true, though we, who arrived in the evening, and left early next day, were not so fortunate as to feel the shock ourselves. But the whole region of Parnassus shows great scars and wounds from this awful natural scourge.

Arachova is remarkable as being one of the very few towns in Greece of any note which is not built upon a celebrated ancient site. Everywhere the modern Greek town is a mere survival of the old. I know but three exceptions—Arachova, Hydria, and Tripolitza, and of these the latter two arose from special and known circumstances. The prosperity of Arachova is not so easily explicable. In spite of the wonderful and curious site, the trade of the place is, for a Greek town, very considerable. The wines which they make are of the highest repute, though to us the free use of resin makes them all equally worthless. Besides this, they work beautifully patterned rugs of divers-coloured wool—rugs which are sold at high prices all over the Greek waters. They are used in boats, on saddles, on beds—in fact for every possible rough use. The patterns are sown on with wool, and the widths sown together in the same way, with effective rudeness.

We had an excellent opportunity of seeing all this sort of work, as we found the town in some excitement at an approaching marriage; and we went to see the bride, whom we found in a large room with low wooden rafters, in the company of a large party of her companions, and surrounded on all sides by her dowry, which consisted, in eastern fashion, almost altogether of 'changes of raiment.' All round the room these rich woollen rugs lay in perfect piles, and from the low ceiling hung in great numbers her future husband's white petticoats; for in that country, as everywhere in Greece, the men wear the petticoats. The company were all dressed in full costume—white sleeves, embroidered woollen aprons, gold and silver coins about the neck, and a bright red loose belt worn low round the figure. To complete the picture, each girl had in her left hand a distaff, swathed about with rich, soft, white wool, from which her right hand and spindle were deftly spinning thread, as she walked about the room admiring the *trousseau*, and joking with us and with her companions. The beauty of the Arachovite women is only equalled by the strength and longevity of the men, nor do I know any mountaineers equal to them, except those of some of the valleys of the Tyrol. But there, as is well known, beauty is chiefly confined to the men; at Arachova it seemed fairly distributed. We did not see any one girl of singular beauty. The average was

remarkably high; and, as might be expected, they were not only very fair, but of that peculiarly clear complexion, and vigorous frame, which seem almost always to be found when a good climate and clear air are combined with a very high level above the sea.

We saw, moreover, what they called a Pyrrhic dance, and which consisted of a string of people, hand-in-hand, standing in the form of a spiral, and moving rhythmically, while the outside member of the train performed curious and violent gymnastics. The music consisted in the squealing of a horrible clarionette, accompanied by the beating of a large drum. The clarionette-player had a leathern bandage about his mouth, like that which we see in the ancient reliefs and pictures of double flute players. According as each principal dancer was fatigued, he passed off from the end of the spiral line, and stuck a silver coin between the cap and forehead of the player. The whole motion was extremely slow throughout the party—the centre of the coil, which is often occupied by little children, hardly moving at all, and paying little attention to the dance.

In general, the Greek music which I heard—dance music, and occasional shepherd's songs—was nothing but a wild and monotonous chant, with two or three shakes and ornaments on a high note, running down to a long drone note at the end. They repeat these phrases, which are not more

than three bars long, over and over again, with some slight variations of *appogiatura*. I was told by competent people at Athens, that all this music was not properly Greek, but Turkish, and that the long slavery of the Greeks has completely destroyed the traditions of their ancient music. Though this seemed certainly true of the music which I heard, I very much doubt that any ancient feature so general as music can have completely disappeared. When there are national songs of a distinctly Greek character transmitted all through the Slavish and Turkish periods, it seems odd that they should be sung altogether to foreign music. Without more careful investigation, I should be slow to decide upon such a question. Unfortunately, our specimens of old Greek music are very few, and probably very insignificant, all the extant works on music by the ancients being devoted to theoretical questions, which are very difficult and not very profitable. To this subject I must devote a special discussion, with what illustration it is now possible to obtain.

The inhabitants wished us to stay with them some days, which would have given us an opportunity of witnessing the wedding ceremony, and also of making excursions to the snowy tops of Mount Parnassus. But we had had enough of that sort of amusement in a climb up Mount Ætna a short time before, and the five hours' toiling on the snow in a thick fog was too fresh in our memory.

Besides, we were bound to catch the weekly steamer at Itea, as the port of Delphi is now called; and eight additional days, or rather nights, in this country might have been too much for the wildest enthusiast. For the wooden houses of Arachova are beyond all other structures infested with life, and not even the balconies in the frosty night air were safe from insect invasions.

We, therefore, started early in the morning, and kept along the sides of precipices on our way to the oracle of Delphi. It is not wonderful that the Arachovites should be famous for superstitions and legends, and that the enquirers into the remnants of old Greek beliefs in the present day have found their richest harvest in this mountain fastness, where there seems no reason why any belief should ever die out. More especially the faith in the terrible god of the dead, Charos, who represents not only the old Charon, but Pluto also, is here very deep-seated, and many Arachovite songs and ballads speak of his awful and relentless visits. Longevity is so usual, and old age is so hale and green in these Alps, that the death of the young comes home with far greater force and pathos here than in unhealthy or immoral societies, and thus the inroads of Charos are not borne in sullen silence, but lamented with impatient complaints.

At eleven o'clock, we came, in the fierce summer sun, to the ascent into the 'rocky Pytho,' where the terraced city of old had once harboured pilgrims

from every corner of the civilized world. The ordinary histories which we read give us but little idea of the mighty influence of this place in the age of its faith. We hear of its being consulted by Crœsus, or by the Romans, and we appreciate its renown for sanctity; but until of very late years, there was small account taken of its political and commercial omnipotence. The date of its first rise is hidden in remote antiquity. As the story goes, a shepherd who fed his flocks here observed the goats, when they approached the vaporous cavern, springing about madly, as if under some strange influence. He came up to see the place himself, and was immediately seized with the prophetic frenzy. So the reputation of the place spread, first around the neighbouring pastoral tribes, and then to a wider sphere.

This very possible origin, however, does not distinctly assert what may certainly be inferred—I mean the existence of some older and ruder worship, before the worship of Apollo was here established. Two arguments make this clear. In the first place, old legends consistently speak of the arrival of Apollo here; of his conflict with the powers of Earth, under the form of the dragon Python; of his having undergone purification for its murder, and having been formally ceded possession by its older owners. This distinct allusion to a previous cult, and one even hostile to Apollo, but ultimately reconciled with him, is sustained by the fact that Pausanias

describes in the Temple of Apollo itself two old stones—one apparently an aërolith—which were treated with great respect, anointed daily with oil, and adorned with garlands of flowers. One of these was to the Greeks the centre of the earth (ὄμφαλος), and beside it were two eagles in gold, to remind one of the legend that Zeus had started two eagles from the ends of the earth, and that they met at this exact spot midway. These old and shapeless stones, which occur elsewhere in Greek temples, point to the older stage of fetish worship, before the Greeks had risen to the art of carving a statue, or of worshipping the unseen deity without a gross material symbol.

Homer speaks in the Iliad of the great wealth of the shrine; and the Hymn to the Pythian Apollo supposes its whole antecedents completed. But seeing that the god Apollo, though originally an Ionian god, as at Delos, was here worshipped distinctively by the Dorians, we shall not err if we consider the rise of the oracle to greatness coincident with the rise and spreading of the Dorians over Greece—an event to which we can assign no date, but which, in legend, comes next after the Trojan War, and seems on the threshold of real history. The absolute submission of the Spartans, when they rose to power, confirmed the authority of the shrine, and so it gradually came to be the Metropolitan See, so to speak, in the Greek religious world. It seems that the influence of this oracle was, in old

days, used uniformly in the direction of good morals and of enlightenment. When neighbouring states were likely to quarrel, the oracle was often a peace-maker, and even acted as arbitrator—a course often adopted in earlier Greek history, and in which they again anticipated the best results of our nineteenth-century culture. So again, when excessive population demanded an outlet, the oracle was consulted as to the proper place, and the proper leader to be selected; and so, all the splendid commercial development of the sixth century B. C., if not produced, was at least guided and promoted by the Delphic Oracle. Again, in determining the worship of other gods, and the founding of new services to great public benefactors, the oracle seems to have been the acknowledged authority—thus taking the place of the Vatican in Catholic Europe, as the source and origin of new dogmas, and of new faiths and formularies.

At the same time the treasurehouse of the shrine was the largest and safest of banks, where both individuals and states might deposit treasure—nay, even the states seem to have had separate chambers—and from which they could also borrow money, at fair interest, in times of war and public distress. The rock of Delphi was held to be the navel or centre of the earth's surface, and certainly, in a social and religious sense, this was the case for all the Greek world. Thus the priests were informed, by perpetual visitors from all sides, of all

the last news—of the general aspect of politics—of the new developments of trade—of the latest discoveries in outlying and barbarous lands—and were accordingly able, without any supernatural inspiration, to form their judgments on wider experience and better knowledge than anybody else could command. This advice, which was really sound and well-considered, was given to people who took it to be divine, and acted upon it with implicit faith and zeal. Of course the result was in general satisfactory, and so even individuals came to use it as a sort of high confessional, to which they came as pilgrims at some important crisis of their life; and finding by the response that the god seemed to know all about the affairs of every city, went away fully satisfied with the divine authority of the oracle.

This great and deserved general reputation was not affected by occasional rumours of bribed responses or of dishonest priestesses. Such things must happen everywhere: but, as Lord Bacon long ago observed, human nature is more affected by affirmatives than negatives—that is to say, a few cases of brilliantly accurate prophecy will outweigh a great number of doubtful advices or even cases of acknowledged corruption. So the power of the Popes has lasted in some respects undiminished to the present day, and they are still regarded by many as infallible, even though historians have published many dreadful lives of some

of them, and branded them as men of worse than average morals.

The greatness—nay, the almost omnipotence—of the Delphic Oracle lasted from the invasion of the Dorians down to the Persian War, certainly more than three centuries; when the part which it took in the latter struggle gave it a blow from which it seems never to have recovered. When the invasion of Xerxes was approaching, the Delphic priests, informed accurately of the immense power of the Persians, made up their minds that all resistance was useless, and counselled absolute submission or flight. According to all human probabilities they were right, for nothing except a series of blunders could possibly have checked the Persians. But surely the god ought to have inspired them to utter patriotic responses, and thus to save themselves in case of such a miracle as actually happened. I cannot but suspect that they hoped to gain the favour of Xerxes, and remain under him what they had hitherto been, a wealthy and protected corporation. Perhaps they even saw too far, and perceived that the success of the Greeks would bring the Ionic states into prominence; but we must not credit them with too much. The result, however, told greatly against them. The Greeks won, and the Athenians got the lead—the Athenians, who very soon developed a secular and worldly spirit, and who were by no means awed by responses which had threat-

ened them and weakened their hands, when their own courage and skill had brought them deliverance—just as in the case of modern Europe, the theological spirit made way for greater enlightenment. And we can imagine even Themistocles, not to speak of Pericles and Antiphon, looking upon the oracles as little more than a convenient way of persuading the mob to follow a policy which it was not able to understand.

But I must not turn these sketches into an historical treatise. It is far better, however, to say something definite and easily understood, than to collect in a foot-note a series of references, and say: 'for the influence of the Delphic Oracle and its history, cf. Bekker's *Anecdota*, or Creuzer's *Symbolik*,' or a host of other books which nobody has beside him, and which in any case nobody cares to consult. I think scholars are to blame in putting forth what they know in such a form as to repel and disgust the average reader. The days are come when Greek history and literature will not maintain their place in our education if we keep them all to ourselves. We must teach everyone what is their greatness, and what are their peculiar merits, which cannot be replaced by any other study. So, then, I do not hesitate to put into this popular book many things which cannot be learned without special and often tedious research.

It is with some sadness that we turn from the splendid past of Delphi to its miserable present.

The sacred cleft in the earth, from which rose the cold vapour which intoxicated the priestess, is blocked up and lost. As it lay within the shrine of the temple, it may have been filled by the falling ruins, or may have been still more completely destroyed by an earthquake. But, apart from these natural possibilities, we are told that the Christians, after the oracle was closed by Theodosius, filled up and effaced the traces of what they held a special entrance to hell, where communications had been held with the Evil One.

The three great fountains or springs of the town are still in existence. The first and most striking bursts out from between the Phædrides, or two shining peaks, which stand up 1000 feet over Delphi, so close together as to leave a dark and mysterious gorge or fissure, not twenty feet wide, between them. The aspect of these twin peaks, so celebrated by the Greek poets, with their splendid stream, the Castalian fount, bursting from between them, is indeed grand and startling. A great square bath is cut in the rock, just at the mouth of the gorge, but the earthquake of 1870, which made such havoc of Arachova, has been busy here also, and has tumbled a huge block into this bath, so covering the old work, as well as several votive niches cut into the rocky wall. This was the place where arriving pilgrims purified themselves with hallowed water.

In the great old days the oracle only gave re-

sponses on the seventh of each month, and even then only when the sacrifices were favourable. If the victims were not perfectly without blemish, they could not be offered; if they did not tremble all over when brought to the altar in the temple, the day was thought unpropitious. The inquirers entered the great temple in festal dress, with olive garlands and *stemmata*, or fillets of wool, led by the ὅσιοι, or sacred guardians of the temple, who were five of the noblest citizens of Delphi. The priestesses, on the contrary—there were three at the same time who officiated in turn—though Delphians also, were not considered of noble family. When the priestess was placed on the sacred tripod by the chief interpreter, or προφήτης, over the exhalations, she was seized with frenzy, often so violent that the ὅσιοι were known to have fled in terror, and the priestess to have become insensible, and to have died. Her ravings in this state were carefully noted down, and then reduced to sense, and of old always to verses, by the attendant priests, who of course interpreted disconnected words with a special reference to the politics or other circumstances of the inquirers.

This was done in early days in perfect good faith. With the decay of religion there were of course many cases of corruption and of partiality, and, indeed, the whole style and dignity of the oracle gradually decayed with the decay of Greece

itself. Presently, when crowds came, and states were extremely jealous of the right of precedence in inquiring of the god, it was found expedient to give responses every day, and this was done to private individuals, and even for trivial reasons. So also the priests no longer took the trouble to shape the responses into verse; and when the Phocians in the sacred war (B. C. 355–46) seized the treasures, and applied to war purposes some 10,000 talents, the shrine suffered a blow from which it never recovered. Still, the quantity of splendid votive offerings which were not convertible into ready money made it the most interesting place in Greece, next to Athens, for lovers of the arts; and the statues, tripods, and other curiosities described there by Pausanias, give a wonderful picture of the great oracle even in its decay. The greatest sculptors, painters, and architects had lavished labour and design upon the buildings. Though Nero had carried off 500 bronze statues, the traveller estimated the remaining works of art at 3000, and yet these seem to have been almost all statues, and not to have included tripods, pictures, and other gifts. The Emperor Constantine (A. D. 330) carried away a great number of these to adorn his capital—more especially the bronze tripod, formed of three intertwined serpents, with their heads supporting a golden vessel, which Pausanias, the Spartan King, had dedicated as the leader of Greece to commemorate the great victory over Xerxes. This tripod was found standing in

its place at Constantinople by our allied armies in 1852, and contains the list of states according to the account of Herodotus, who describes its dedication, and who saw it at Delphi.

When the Emperor Julian, the last great supporter of Paganism, desired to consult the oracle on his way to Persia, in 362 A. D., it replied: 'Tell the king the fair-wrought dwelling has sunk into the dust: Phœbus has no longer a shelter or a prophetic laurel, neither has he a speaking fountain; the fair water is dried up.' Thus did the shrine confess, even to the ardent and hopeful Julian, that its power was gone, and, as it were by a last great effort, declared to him the great truth which he refused to see—that Paganism was gone for ever, and a new faith had arisen for the nations of the Roman Empire.

About the year 390, Theodosius took the god at his word, and closed the oracle finally. The temple—with its cella of 100 feet—with its Doric and Ionic pillars—with its splendid sculptures upon the pediments—sank into decay and ruin. The gymnasia and porticos tumbled down the precipitous cliffs; the prophetic chasm was filled up by the Christians with fear and horror; and, as it to destroy any attempt to reconstruct from ruins the site and plan, the modern Greeks built their miserable hamlet of Castri upon the spot; so that it is only among the walls and foundations laid bare by earthquakes, that we can now seek for marble capitals and votive inscriptions.

One or two features are still unchanged. The three fine springs, to which Delphi doubtless owed its first selection for human habitation, are still there: Castalia, of which we have spoken; Cassotis, which was led artificially into the very shrine of the god; and Delphussa, which was, I suppose, the water used for secular purposes by the inhabitants. The stadium, too, a tiny racecourse high above the town, in the only place where they could find a level 150 yards, is still there; and we see at once what the importance of games must have been at a holy Greek town, when such a thing as a stadium should be attempted here.[1] The earliest competitions had been in music—that is, in playing the lyre, in recitation, and probably in the composition of original poems; but presently the physical contests of Olympia began to outdo the splendour of Delphi. Moreover, the Spartans would not compete in minstrelsy, which they liked and criticised, but left to professional artists. Accordingly, the priests of Delphi were too practical a corporation not to widen the programme of their games, and Pindar has celebrated the Pythian victors as hardly second to those at the great festival of Elis.

There is yet one more element in the varied greatness of Delphi. It was here that the religious federation of Greece—the Amphictyony of which we hear so often—held its meetings alter-

[1] The hippodrome for the chariot races was, however, in the plain beneath, as Pausanias tells us (x. 37, 4).

nately with the meetings at the springs of Thermopylæ. When I stood high up on the stadium at Delphi, the great scene described by the orator Æschines came fresh upon me, when he looked upon the sacred plain of Crissa, and called all the worshippers of the god to clear it of the sacrilegious Amphissians, who had covered it with cattle and growing crops. The plain, says he, is easily surveyed from the place of meeting—a statement which shows that it cannot have been in the town of Delphi; for a great shoulder of the mountain effectually hides the whole plain from every part of the town.

The Pylæa, or place of meeting, was, however, outside, and precisely at the other side of this huge shoulder, so that what Æschines says is true; but it is not true, as every ordinary student imagines, that he was standing in Delphi itself. He was, in fact, completely out of sight of the town, though not a mile from it. There is no more common error than this among our English scholars—and I dare say there are not many who realize the existence of this suburban Pylæa, and its situation close to, but invisible from, Delphi. It certainly never came home to me till I began to look for the spot from which Æschines might have delivered his famous extempore address.

When we rode round to the real place, we found his words amply verified. Far below us stretched the plain from Amphissa to Cirrha, at

right angles with the gorge above which Delphi is situate. The river-courses of the Delphic springs form, in fact, a regular zig-zag. When they tumble from their great elevation on the rocks into the valley, they join the Pleistus, running at right angles towards the west; when this torrent has reached the plain, it turns again due south, and runs into the sea at the Gulf of Cirrha. Thus, looking from Pylæa, you see the upper part of the plain, and the gorge to the north-west of it, where Amphissa occupies its place in a position similar to the mouth of the gorge of Delphi. The southern rocks of the gorge over against Delphi shut out the sea, and the actual bay; but a large rich tract, covered with olive-woods, and medlars, and oleanders, is stretched out beneath the eye—verily a plain worth fighting for, and a possession still more precious, as it commanded the approach of pilgrims from the sea, so that the harbour duties and tolls of Cirrha were once a great wealth, and threatened the oracle with poverty. This levying of tolls on the pilgrims of Delphi became quite a national question in the days of Solon; it resulted in a great war, led by the Amphictyonic Council. Cirrha was ruined, and its land dedicated to the god, in order to protect the approach from future difficulties. So this great plain was, I suppose, devoted to pasture, and the priests probably levied a rent from the people who chose to graze their cattle on the sacred plain. The people of Amphissa,

who lived, not at the sea-side, but at the mountain side of the plain, were never accused of robbing or taxing the pilgrims; but having acquired for many generations the right of pasture, they advanced to the idea of tilling their pastures, and were undisturbed in this privilege, till the mischievous orator, Æschines, for his own purposes, fired the Delphians with rage, kindled a war, and so brought Philip into Greece. These are the historical circumstances which should be called to mind by the traveller, who rides down the steep descent from Delphi to the plain, and then turns through the olive-woods to the high road to Itea, as the port of Delphi is now called.

A few hours brought us to the neighbourhood of the sea. The most curious feature of this valley, as we saw it, was a long string of camels tied together, and led by a small and shabby donkey. Our mules and horses turned with astonishment to examine these animals, which have survived here alone of all the places into which they were introduced long ago by the Turks.

The port of Itea is one of the stations at which the Greek coasting steamers now call, and, accordingly, the place is growing in importance. If a day's delay were allowed to let tourists ride up to the old seat of the oracle, and if the service were better regulated, I suppose no traveller would choose any other route on his way to Athens. For he would see all the beautiful coasts of Acarnania

and Ætolia on the one side, and of Achaia on the other; he could take Delphi in his way, and would then arrive at Corinth. Here, again, a day, or part of a day, should be allowed to see the splendid Acro-Corinthus, of which more in the next chapter. The traveller might thus arrive at Athens with an important part of Greece already visited, and have more leisure to turn his attention to the monuments and curiosities of Athens and Attica. It is worth while to suggest these things, because most men who go to Greece find, as I did, that, with some better previous information, they could have economised both time and money. I should almost advise that the steamer—which sails from Brindisi—should be abandoned at Itea, from which the traveller can easily get horses to Delphi and Arachova, and from thence to Chæronea, Lebadea, and through Thebes to Athens. So he would arrive at Athens on a land tour, which would make him acquainted with all Bœotia. He might next sail from Athens to Corinth, and then take horse, and ride into the Peloponnese; going first to Mycenæ and Argos, and thence taking another steamer round to Sparta, and riding up through Laconia and Arcadia, so as to come out at Patras, where the steamer homewards would pick him up. Of course, special excursions through Attica, and to the islands, are not included in this sketch, as they can easily be made from Athens. But surely, no voyage in Greece can be called com-

plete which does not include a visit to the famous shrine of Delphi, where the wildness and ruggedness of nature naturally suggests the powers of earth and air, that sway our lives unseen—where the quaking earth and the rent rocks speak a power above the strength of mortal men—and where a great religious system, based upon these natural hopes and fears, gained a moral empire over all the nation, and exercised it for centuries, to the purifying and the ennobling of the Hellenic race. The oracle is long silent, the priestess forgotten, the temple not only ruined, but destroyed; and yet the grand utterances of that noble shrine are not forgotten, nor are they dead. For they have contributed their part, and added their element to the general advancement of the world, and to the emancipation of man from immorality and from superstition, into the true liberty of a good and enlightened conscience.

CHAPTER X.

CORINTH, MYCENÆ, TIRYNS.

THE gulf of Corinth is a very beautiful and narrow fiord, with chains of mountains on either side, through the gaps of which you can see far into the Morea on one side, and into Northern Greece, on the other. But the bays or harbours on either coast are few, and so there was no city able to wrest the commerce of these waters from old Corinth, which held the keys by land of the whole Peloponnesus, and commanded the passage from sea to sea. It is, indeed, wonderful how Corinth did not acquire and maintain the first position in Greece. It may, perhaps, have been so in the days of Periander, and we hear at various times of inventions and discoveries in Corinth, which show that, commercially and artistically, it was among the leading cities of Greece. But, whenever the relations of the various powers become clear, as in the Persian or Peloponnesian Wars, we find Corinth always at the head of the second-rate states, and never among the first. This is possibly to be accounted for by the predominance of trade interests, which are the source of such material prosperity, that men have too much to lose, and will not devote time and labour to politics, or stake their fortunes for the defence of princi-

ple. Thus, it seems as if the Corinthians had been the shopkeepers of Greece.

But as soon as the greater powers of Greece decayed and fell away, we find Corinth immediately taking the highest position in wealth, and even in importance. The capture of Corinth, in 146 B. C., marks the Roman conquest of all Greece, and the art-treasures carried to Rome seem to have been as great and various as those which even Athens could have produced. No sooner had Julius Cæsar restored and rebuilt the ruined city, than it sprang at once again into importance, and among the societies addressed in the Epistles of St. Paul, none seem to have lived in greater wealth or luxury. It was, in fact, well nigh impossible that Corinth should die. Nature had marked out her site as one of the great thoroughfares of the world; and it was not till after centuries of blighting misrule by the wretched Turks that she sank into the hopeless decay from which not even another Julius Cæsar could rescue her.[1]

These were our reflections as we passed up the gulf on a splendid summer evening, the mountains of Arcadia showing their snowy tops a deep rose colour in the setting sun. And passing by Ægion and Sicyon, we came to anchor at the harbour of Lechæum. There is now a public conveyance

[1] On the foundation of the new Greek kingdom, it was seriously debated whether Corinth should not be the capital; but the constant prevalence of fever in the district determined the selection of Athens in preference.

which takes the traveller across the isthmus to Cenchreæ, where a boat is in readiness to bring him to Athens. But, with the usual absurdity of this service, no time is allowed for visiting Corinth and its Acropolis. We, however, stayed for the night in the boat, and started in the morning for our ride into the Peloponnesus. This arrangement is almost necessary, as the port of Lechæum cannot even afford the traveller a chance of a decent meal. The Greek steamers are, besides, of considerable interest to any observant person. They seem always full of passengers and dogs, and as the various classes mix indiscriminately on deck, all sorts of manners and culture can be easily compared.

The fondness of the Greeks for driving a bargain is often to be noticed. Thus, a Greek gentleman on this boat, perceiving that we were strangers in pursuit of art and antiquities, produced two very fine gold coins of Philip and Alexander, which he offered for £5. That of Philip was particularly beautiful—a very perfect Greek head in profile, crowned with laurel, and on the reverse a chariot and four, with the legend, Φίλιππος. Not being a very expert judge of coins, and supposing that he had asked more than the value, I offered him £2 10*s.* for this one, which was considerably the larger; but he would not take any abatement. He evidently was not anxious to sell them, but merely took chance of getting a good price, and investing it again at better interest.

Seeing that the coin seemed a little heavier than our sovereign, and is not uncommon in collections, I fancy the price he asked was excessive. The Athenian shops, which are notorious for their prices to strangers, had similar coins, for which about £4 was asked. On this, and a thousand other points, the traveller should be instructed by some competent person before he sets out. Genuine antiquities seem to me so common in Greece, that imitations are hardly worth manufacturing. Even with a much greater market, the country can supply for generations an endless store of real remains of ancient Greece. But, nevertheless, the prices of these things are already very high. The ordinary tourist does not reach these shores, so that the only seekers after them are enthusiasts, who will not hesitate to give even fancy prices for what they like.

The form of the country, as you ascend from Lechæum to Corinth, is very marked and peculiar. At some distance from the flat shore the road leads up through a steep pass of little height, which is cut through a long ridge of rock, almost like a wall, and over which lies a higher plateau of land. The same feature is again repeated a mile inland, as the traveller approaches the site of ancient Corinth. These plateaus, though not lofty, are well marked, and perfectly distinct, the passes from one to the other being quite sufficient to form a strong place of defence against an attacking force. How far these rocky parapets reach I

TEMPLE AT CORINTH. P. 239.

did not examine. Behind the highest plateau rises the great cliff on which the citadel was built. But even from the site of the old city it is easy to obtain a commanding view of the isthmus, of the two seas, and of the Achæan coast up to Sicyon.

The traveller who expects to find any sufficient traces of the city of Periander and of Timoleon, and, I may say, of St. Paul, will be grievously disappointed. In the middle of the wretched, straggling modern village there stand up seven enormous rough stone pillars of the Doric Order, evidently of the oldest and heaviest type; and these are the only visible relic of the ancient city, looking altogether out of place, and almost as if they had come there by mistake. These pillars, though insufficient to let us reconstruct the temple, are in themselves profoundly interesting. The whole shaft up to the capital is of one block, about twenty-one feet high and six feet in diameter. It is to be observed, that over these gigantic monoliths, the architrave, in which other Greek temples show the largest blocks, is not in one piece, but two, and made of beams laid together longitudinally.[1] The length of the shafts (up to the neck

[1] M. Viollet-le-duc, in his *Entretiens sur l'Architecture*, vol. i. p. 45, explains the reason of this. Apart from the greater facility of raising smaller blocks, most limestones are subject to flaws, which only are disclosed by pressure. Hence, in using the inferior kinds, it was much safer to support the entablature on two separate beams, one of which might sustain, at least temporarily, the building, in case the other should crack.

of the capital) measures about four times their diameter, on the photograph which I possess; I do not suppose that any other Doric pillar known to us is so stout and short. The material is said almost universally to be limestone, but if my eyes served me aright, it was a very porous and now rough sandstone, not the least like the bluish limestone in which the lions of the gate of Mycenæ are carved. The pillars are said to have been covered with stucco, and were of course painted. Perhaps even the figures of the pediment were modelled in clay, as we are told was the case in the oldest Corinthian temples, when first the fashion came in of thus ornamenting an otherwise flat and unsightly surface. The great temple of Pæstum, which is, perhaps, the next oldest, and certainly the finest extant specimen of the original Doric style, has no figures in the pediment, and seems never to have had them, except, indeed, they were painted in fresco on the stucco, with which it was probably covered. Those who have seen the temple at Pæstum are, perhaps, the only visitors who will be able to frame to themselves an image of the very similar structure at Corinth, which Turks and earthquakes have reduced to seven columns. There must have been in it the same simplicity, the same almost Egyptian massiveness, and yet the same unity of plan and purpose which excludes all idea of clumsiness or disproportion.

The longer one studies the Greek orders of architecture, the more the conviction grows that the

Doric is of all the noblest and the most natural. When lightened and perfected by the Athenians of Pericles' time, it becomes simply unapproachable, but even in older and ruder forms, it seems to me vastly superior to either of the more ornate orders. All the massive temples of Roman times were built in the very ornate Corinthian, which may almost be called the Græco-Roman, style; but, notwithstanding the majesty and beauty of these, they are not to be compared with the severer and more religious tone of the Doric remains. I may add that the titles by which the orders are distinguished seem ill-chosen and without meaning, except, perhaps, that the Ionic was most commonly used, and probably invented, in Asia Minor. The earliest specimen of the Corinthian Order is at Athens; the most perfect of the Doric is at Athens also, while Ionic temples are found everywhere. But it is idle now to attempt to change such definite and well-sanctioned names.

Straight over the site of the town is the great rock known as the Acro-Corinthus. A winding path leads up on the south-west side to the Turkish drawbridge and gate, which are now deserted and open, nor is there a single guard or soldier to watch a spot once the coveted prize of contending empires. In the days of the Achæan League it was called one of the fetters of Greece, and indeed it requires no military experience to see the extraordinary importance of the place. Strabo speaks

of the Peloponnesus as the Acropolis of Greece—Corinth may fairly be called the Acropolis of the Peloponnesus. It runs out boldly from the surging mountain-chains of the peninsula, like an outpost or sentry, guarding all approach from the north. In days when news was transmitted by fire signals, we can imagine how all the southern country must have depended on the watch upon the rock of Corinth. It is separated by a wide plain of land, ending in the isthmus, from the Geranean Mountains which come from the north, and belong to a different mountain system.

Next to the view from the heights of Parnassus, I suppose the view from this citadel is held the finest in Greece.[1] I speak here of the large and diverse views to be obtained from mountain heights. To me, personally, such a view as that from the promontory of Sunium, or, above all, from the harbour of Nauplia, exceeds in beauty and interest any bird's-eye prospect. Anyone who looks at the map of Greece will see how the Acro-Corinthus commands coasts, islands, and bays. The day was too hazy when we stood there to let us measure the real limits of the view, and I cannot say how near to Mount Olympus the eye may reach in a suitable atmosphere. But a host of islands, the southern coasts of Attica and Bœotia, the Acropolis of Athens, Salamis and Ægina, Helicon and Par-

[1] Strabo, who had apparently travelled but little through Greece, speaks with admiration of this view, which he had evidently seen.

nassus, and endless Ætolian peaks were visible in one direction, while, as we turned round, all the waving reaches of Arcadia and Argolis, down to the approaches towards Tegea and Sparta, were laid out before us. The plain of Argos, and the sea at that side, are hidden by the mountains. But without going into details, this much may be said, that if a man wants to realize the features of these coasts, which he has long studied on maps, half an hour's walk about the top of this rock will give him a geographical insight which no years of study could attain.

The surface is very large, at least half a mile each way, and is covered inside the bounding wall with the remains of a large Turkish town, now in ruins and totally deserted, but evidently of no small importance in the days of the War of Liberation. The building of this town was a great misfortune to antiquarians, for every fragment of old Greek work was used as material for the modern houses. Everywhere through the walls may be seen white marble fragments of pillars and architraves, and I have no doubt that a careful dilapidation of the modern abandoned houses would amply repay the outlay. There are several pits for saving rain-water, and some shallow underground passages of which we could not make out the purpose. The pits or tanks must have been merely intended to save trouble, for about the middle of the plateau, which sinks considerably towards the south, we

were brought to a passage into the ground, which led by a rapid descent to the famous well of Pirene, the water of which was so perfectly clear that we walked into it on going down the steps, as there was actually no water-line visible. It was twelve or fourteen feet deep, and perhaps twenty-five feet long, so far as we could make it out in the twilight underground. The structure of marble over the fountain is the only piece of old Greek work we could find on the rock. It consists of three supports, like pillars, made of several pieces, and over them a sort of architrave. Then there is a gap in the building, and from the large number of pieces of marble lying at the bottom of the well we concluded that the frieze and cornice had fallen out. The pediment, or rather its upper outline, is still in its place, clear of the architrave, and built into the rock so as to remain without its supporting cornice.

There are numerous inscriptions over the walls, which I did not copy, because I was informed they had already been published, though I have not since been able to find them. They appeared to me at the time to be either very illegible, or suspiciously clear. But they are, of course, to be found in some of the Greek archæological newspapers. This great well, springing up near the top of a great barren rock, is very curious, especially as we could see no outlet. The water was deep under the surface, and there was no sign of

welling up, or of outflow anywhere. But to make sure of this would have required a long and careful ride round the whole ridge. Our guide-book spoke of rushing streams and waterfalls tumbling down the rock, which we searched for in vain, and which may have been caused by a winter rainfall without any connection with the fountain. But we had already delayed too long upon this rock, where we would have willingly spent a day or two at greater leisure. Our guide urged us to start on our long ride, which was not to terminate till we reached the town of Argos, some thirty miles over the mountains.

The country into which we passed was very different from any we had yet seen, and still it was intensely Greek. All the hills and valleys showed a very white, chalky soil, which actually glittered like snow where it was not covered with verdure or trees. Road, as usual, there was none; but all these hills and ravines, chequered with snowy white, were clothed with shining arbutus trees, and shrubs resembling dwarf holly. Here and there was a plain or valley with great fields of thyme about the arbutus, and there were herds of goats wandering through the shrubs, and innumerable bees gathering honey from the thyme. The scene was precisely such as Theocritus describes in the uplands of Sicily; but in all our rides through that delightful island, we had never found the thyme and arbutus, the goats and bees, in such truly

Theocritean perfection. We listened in vain for the shepherd's pipe, and sought in vain for some Thyrsis beguiling his time with the oaten reed. It was almost noon time—noon, the hour of awe and mystery to the olden shepherd, when Pan slept his mid-day sleep, and the wanton satyr was abroad, prowling for adventure through the silent woods—so that, even in pagan days, we might have longed in vain for the companionship of melody. But now the silence was not from dread of Pan's displeasure, but that the sun's fiercer heat had warned the shepherds to depart to the snowy heights of Cyllene, where they dwell all the summer in Alpine huts, and feed their flocks on the upland pastures, which are covered with snow till late in the spring.

They had left behind them a single comrade, with his wife and little children, to care the weak and the lame till their return. We found this family settled in their winter quarters, which consisted of a square enclosure of thorns (*θρίγκος ἀχέρδου*), built up with stones, round a very old spreading olive-tree. At the foot of the tree were the pots and pans, and other household goods, with some skins and rude rugs lying on the ground. There was no attempt at a roof or hut of any kind, though, of course, it might be set up in a moment, as we had seen in the defiles of Parnassus, with skins hung over three sticks—two uprights, and the third joining their tops, so as to form a ridge.

To make the scene Homeric, instead of Theocri-

tean, two large and very savage dogs rushed out upon us at our approach, but the shepherd hurried out after them, and drove them off by pelting them with all his might with stones. 'Surely,' he said, turning to us breathlessly from his exertions, 'you had met, O strangers! with some mischief, if I had not been here.' These dogs disappeared, in deep anger, into the thicket, and, though we stayed at the place for some time, never reappeared to threaten or to pursue us on our departure. We talked as best we could to the gentle shepherdess, one of whose children had a fearfully scalded hand, for which we suggested remedies, to her occult and wonderful, though here so trite as to be despised by the wise. She gave us in return great bowls of heated milk, which was being made into cheese, and into various kinds of curds, which are the very best produce of the country. They would take no money for their hospitality, but did not object to our giving the children coins to play with—to them, I am sure, a great curiosity.

Most of our journey was not, however, through pastures and plains, but up and down steep ravines, where riding was so difficult and dangerous that we were often obliged to dismount and lead our horses. Every hour or two brought us to a fountain springing from a rock, and over it generally a great spreading fig-tree, with the water framed in on both sides with a perfect turf of maiden-hair fern. The only considerable valley which we passed was

that of Cleonæ, which we left some miles on our left, and about which there was a great deal of growing corn, and many shady plane trees. Indeed, the corn was so plenty, that we saw asses grazing in it quite contentedly, without any interference from thrifty farmers. We had seen a very similar sight in Sicily, where the enormous deep-brown Sicilian oxen, with their forward-pointing horns, were stretching their huge forms in fields of half-ripe wheat, which covered all the plain, without fence or division. There, too, it seemed as if this was the cheapest grazing, and as if it were not worth while to drive the cattle to some untilled pasture. As for the treading-out of this corn, I saw it done at Argos by a string of seven horses abreast, with two young foals at the outside, galloping round a small circular threshing-floor in the open field, upon which the ripe sheaves had been laid in fan-shaped pattern. I have no doubt that a special observer of farming operations would find many interesting survivals both in Greece and the two Sicilies.

Towards evening, after many hours of travel, we turned aside on our way down the plain of Argos, to see the famous ruins of Mycenæ. The situation of this place struck me as very peculiar. Close to a chain of high mountains which bound the lower country on the north, but separated from them by a deep ravine, there is a long hillock or saddle rising out of the plain somewhat the shape of a

reversed note of interrogation. The whole upper extremity up to the north point is occupied by the ruins of the walls of Mycenæ. The treasure-house of Atreus is on the swell of the lower part, over against the city, but separated from it by a narrow, deep valley. The other two similar buildings, which are only opened at the top, and one of them welling out with water, are on the line of the hill, halfway between the lion gate and the house of Atreus.

These celebrated structures have been so often and so carefully described, that I need not attempt any detailed account, but will rather presuppose a general knowledge of them, and make such observations as struck me most in wandering about among them. Let us take the treasure-house, as it is called, first. It is in no sense a rude building, or one of a barbarous or helpless age, but, on the contrary, the product of enormous appliances and a perfect knowledge of all the mechanical requirements of any building, if we except the application of the arch. The stones are hewn square, and laid together with admirable fitting. Over the immense lintel-stone, which is 27 feet long, and which is bevelled all along its edge over the doorway, there is now a triangular window or aperture, which was almost certainly filled with ornamental work, like the triangle over the lintel of the gate of Mycenæ. Shortly after Lord Elgin had cleared the entrance, at the beginning of this century—a work

for which he certainly deserves our deepest gratitude—Dodwell saw lying in front of the doorway a broken piece of red porphyry or marble, and a patterned stone, ornamented in a style exceedingly like the old Irish interlacing. This pattern is reproduced in one of his plates. Some of these pieces of old ornament are now said to be built into the wall of a house at Nauplia, and some are in the British Museum. As the actual doorway is certainly in its original state, and there can have been nothing in front of the great stones which are there, it is impossible to find any other place for this ornament (which, by the way, used variety of colour in the stone) than the aperture over the lintel. The analogy of the gate of Mycenæ confirms this; and there is, besides, a good architectural reason for leaving this gap in the more massive building, where the pressure on the doorway might force down even the giant masses which now support their burden easily.

A spreading fig-tree starts from over the lintel, and throws a pleasant shade over the huge entrance, which is black within—black as night, in spite of the light admitted from over the doorway.

We went in by the light of torches, and found ourselves in the great cone-shaped chamber, which, strange to say, reminded me more of the Pantheon at Rome than any other building I know, and is nevertheless built on a very different principle. The stones are not pushed forward one above

the other, as in ruder stone roofs through Ireland; but each stone, which is on the other surfaces cut perfectly square, has its inner face curved so that the upper end comes out several inches above the lower. So each stone carries on the conical plan, having its lower line fitting closely to the upper line of the one beneath, and the whole dome ends with a great flat stone laid on the top.[1]

Dodwell still found copper nails of some inches long, which he supposed to have been used to fasten on thin plates of shining metal; but I was unable to find even the holes in the roof, which other travellers have asserted to be the points where the nails were inserted.[2] However, without being provided with magnesium wire, it is not possible to light the chamber sufficiently for a positive decision on this point. A small side chamber seems hollowed out in the rock and earth, without any stone casing or ornament whatever, but has a similar triangular aperture over its doorway.

There has been much controversy about the use to which this building was applied, and we cannot now attempt to change the name, even if we could prove its absurdity. Pausanias, who saw it in the second century A. D., found it in much the same state as we do, and was no better informed than we, though he states the popular

[1] According to Pausanias, the treasury of Minyas was differently built; for the top stone of its flat dome was the keystone (ἁρμονία) of the whole.

[2] Professor Sayce tells me he looked for these traces, as I did, but also in vain.

belief that it was a treasure-house like that of the Minyæ at Orchomenus, which was very much greater, and was, in his opinion, one of the most wonderful things in all Greece. But it does not seem to me that his opinion, which, indeed, is not very clear, need in the least shackle our judgments. Most scholars are strongly inclined to the theory that it is a tomb. In the first place, there are two other similar buildings quite close to it, which Pausanias mentions as the treasure-houses of the sons of Atreus, but which make it most unlikely that any of them could be for treasure. Surely such a house could only be owned by the reigning king, and there is no reason why his successor should make himself a new vault for this purpose. In the next place, these buildings were all underground and dark, and exactly such as would be selected for tombs. Thirdly, they are not situated within the enclosure of the wall of Mycenæ, but are outside it, and probably outside the old town altogether—a thing quite inconceivable if they were meant for treasure, but most reasonable, and according to all analogy, if they were used as tombs. This, too, would of course explain the number of them—three separate kings having built them, just like the pyramids of Chufu, Safra, and Menkerah, on the plain of Memphis in Egypt. It is even quite easy and natural to explain on this hypothesis how they came to be thought treasure-houses. It is known that the sepulchral tumuli of similar construction in other

places, and possibly built by kindred people, contained much treasure, left there by way of honour to the deceased. Herodotus describes this in Scythian tombs, some of which have been opened of late, and have verified his assertions. The lavish expense at Patroclus' funeral in the Iliad shows the prevalence of similar notions among the Homeric Greeks, who held, down to Æschylus' day, that the importance of a man among the dead was in proportion to the circumstance with which his tomb was treated by the living. It may, therefore, be assumed as certain that these strongholds of the dead, if they were such, were filled with many precious things in gold and other metals, intended as parting gifts in honour of the king who was laid to rest within. Long after the devastation of Mycenæ, I suppose that these tombs were opened in search of treasure, and not in vain; and so nothing was said about the skeleton within, while rumours went abroad of the rich treasure-trove within the giant portal. Thus, then, the tradition would spring up and grow that the building was the treasure-house of some old legendary king.

These antiquarian considerations have led us away from the actual survey of the old vault, for ruin it cannot be called. The simplicity and massiveness of its structure have defied age and violence, and except for the shattered ornaments, not a stone appears ever to have been moved from its place. Standing at the entrance, you look out upon the

scattered masonry of the walls of Mycenæ, on the hillock over against you. Close behind this is a dark and solemn chain of mountains. The view is narrow and confined, and looks to the north, so that, for most of the day, the gate is dark and in shadow. We can conceive no fitter place for the burial of a king, within sight of his city, in the heart of a deep natural hillock, with a great solemn portal symbolising the resistless strength of the barrier which he had passed into an unknown land. But one more remark seems necessary. This treasure-house is by no means a Greek building in its features. It has the same perfection of wall-building, which can be seen at Eleutheræ, or any other Greek fort, but still the really analogous buildings are to be seen in far distant lands—in the raths of Ireland, and the barrows of the Crimea.

I had the opportunity since of comparing the structure and effect of the great sepulchral monuments in the County of Meath, in Ireland. Two of these, Dowth and New Grangè, are opened, and can be entered almost as easily as the treasury of Atreus. They lie close to the rich valley of the Boyne, in that part of the country which was pointed out by nature as the earliest seat of wealth and culture. Dowth is the ruder and less ornamented, and, therefore, not improbably the older, but is less suited for the present comparison than the greater and more ornate New Grange.

This splendid tomb is not a whit less remarkable,

or less colossal in its construction, than the tomb at Mycenæ, but differs in many details. It was not hollowed out in a hill-side, but was built of great upright stones, with flat slabs laid over them, and then covered with a mountain of earth and of loose stones. Instead of passing through a short entrance into a great vaulted chamber, there is a long, narrow corridor, which leads to a much smaller, but still very lofty chamber, nearly twenty feet high. Three recesses in the walls of this chamber contain each a large, round saucer, so to speak, made of a single stone, in which the remains of the dead seem to have been laid. This saucer is very shallow, and not more than four feet in diameter. The great stones with which the chamber and passage are constructed are not hewn or shaped, and so far the building is rather comparable with that of Tiryns than of Mycenæ. But all over the faces of the stones are endless spiral and zig-zag ornaments, even covering surfaces built in, and thus invisible, so that the ornament must have been laid on prior to the building. On the outside stones, both under and over the entry, there is well-executed carving of similar geometrical designs.

Putting aside smaller details, it may be said that while both monuments show an equal display of human strength, and an equal contempt for human toil, which they lavished without stint, the Greek building shows far greater finish of design and neatness of execution, together with greater simpli-

city. The stones are all carefully hewn and fitted, but not carved or decorated. The triangular carved stone over the lintel, and the supposed metal plates on the interior, were both foreign to the original structure. On the contrary, the Irish tomb is a far greater feature in the landscape—a great landmark in the district. But the great stones within are not fitted together, nor hewn into shape, and yet they are covered with patterns and designs strangely similar to the ornament found by Dodwell at the Argive tomb. Thus the Irish builders, with far greater rudeness, show a greater taste for ornament. They care less for design and symmetry—more for beauty of detail. The Greek essay naturally culminates in the severe symmetry of the Doric Temple—the Irish in the glorious intricacy of the illuminations of the *Book of Kells*.

A great deal of what was said about the tomb of Agamemnon, as the common people, with truer instinct, call the supposed treasure-house, may be repeated about the fortifications of Mycenæ. It is the work of builders who know perfectly how to deal with their materials—who can hew and fit great blocks of stone with perfect ease, nay, who prefer, for the sake of massive effect, to treat their doorway with such enormous blocks as even modern science would find it difficult to handle. The ornament over the gate, fortunately, remains almost entire. Two lions, standing up at a small pillar, were looking out fiercely at the stranger. The

heads are gone. The rest of the sculpture is entire. It is a piece of blueish limestone, quite different from the rough conglomerate of the rest of the gate. The lintel-stone is not nearly so vast as that of the treasure-house: it is only fifteen feet long, but is somewhat thicker, and also much deeper, going back the full depth of the gateway. Still, it must weigh a good many tons; and it puzzles us to think how it can have been put into its place, with the appliances then in use. The joint use of square and polygonal masonry is very curious. Standing inside the gate, one side is of square hewn stones, the other of irregular, though well-fitted, blocks. On the left side, looking *at* the gate, there is a gap of one block in the wall, which looks very like a window, as it is not likely that a single stone was taken, or fell out of its place afterwards, without disturbing the rest. What makes it, perhaps, more possible that this window is intentional, is the position of the gate, which is not in the middle of the walled causeway, as you go in, but to the right side.

The fortifications of the town can still be traced round the summit of a moderately sized hill, much larger than Tiryns, but quite in the same way a hill-fort. The tombs outside speak, however, of a far greater wealth and importance. So also the wheel-tracks, going in through the gate, and the holes in the stone door-posts made for hinges and bars, give it quite a modern air compared to the rude and decayed entrances to the fort of Tiryns.

Mycenæ, which was to Homer the wealthiest and most brilliant capital in Greece, probably attained its greatness at the expense of Tiryns, if, indeed, this latter was ever anything more than an unusually large and massive fort for the protection of cattle from invading pirates. The remains of Mycenæ quite corroborate Homer's views, and show that here as elsewhere his poems were based upon geographical and historical knowledge. Even in his day, Argos is spoken of as a sort of second capital; Agamemnon is constantly spoken of as King of Argos and Mycenæ. One might be almost tempted to think that the sea reached closer into Argos than it now does, and that Argos was the port of Mycenæ. But, however that may be, it is certain that the importance of Argos rose, especially with the Dorian invasion, for the new comers made it their capital, and carried on war from thence on the older population of the neighbourhood. Still, Mycenæ long outlived its old renown, and it was not till after the Persian wars that the Argives, after a long siege of the great fort, succeeded in starving-out the town and expelling the inhabitants.[1]

From that day to this the lion gate and the

[1] I think this enforced *συνοικισμός*, or fusion, of the other towns in the plain of Argos by the Argives has not been sufficiently noticed by our historians. The evidence of Pausanias is express that it did not take place till after the Persian wars, and therefore not in the period of the supposed greatness of Argos, before the rise of Sparta. The My-

fortifications have remained in the same state; at least when Pausanias saw them, in the second century A. D., they were not very different from what they now are. They stand a remarkable witness to the truth of the legends of the Greeks, which place their oldest culture and their oldest empire at the head of this famous plain, and which particularly speak of foreign emigrants bringing arts and civilization from the south and the east to the rude inhabitants of Greece. They point back, too, as I have already noticed, to a period when the architecture and art of the Greeks had not yet assumed its peculiar complexion and its unparalleled beauty, and was still similar to the remains left us by many other branches of the Aryan race, or, perhaps, even of older races all over the continent of Europe. Whether, indeed, all these buildings do not point to older races, and whether the Achæan chiefs did not occupy fortresses left to them by a bygone and forgotten dynasty of primeval kings, is a question fit for archæological discussion. Our evidence does not allow us historical inferences of so vast a reach.

The fortress of Tiryns, which I have already mentioned repeatedly, and which we visited next

cenæans would not brook submission, and migrated thence to Keryneia, or even to Macedonia. The rest seem to have submitted, according to a remarkable and little-known passage of Pausanias (VIII. 27, 1). The connexion between Mycenæ and Macedonia is curious.

day, may fitly be commented on in connexion with the younger, or at least more artistically finished Mycenæ. It stands several miles nearer to the sea, in the centre of the great plain of Argos, and upon the only natural hillock which there affords any natural scope for fortification. Instead of the square, hewn, and well-fitted blocks of Mycenæ, we have here the far older style of rude masses piled together as best they would fit, and the interstices filled up with smaller fragments. This is essentially Cyclopean building.[1] There is a smaller fort, of parallelogram shape, on the southern and highest part of the oblong hillock, the whole of which is surrounded by a lower wall, which takes in both this and the northern longer part of the ridge. It looks, in fact, like a hill-fort, with a large enclosure for cattle connected with it.

Just below the north-east angle of the inner fort, and when the lower circuit is about to leave it, there is an entrance, with a massive wall of huge stones, looking like a square tower, on its right side, so as to defend it from attack. The most remarkable feature in the walls are the covered galleries, constructed within them at the south-east

[1] Pausanias speaks of Mycenæ and Tiryns as of like structure, which is not true. He often refers with wonder to these walls, and reflects upon the care with which Greek historians had described foreign curiosities like the Pyramids, while equally wonderful things in Greece were left unnoticed. Thus, he says that no pair of mules could stir from its place the smallest of the blocks in the walls of Tiryns. Cf. II. 25, 8; and IX. 36, 5.

angle. The whole thickness of the wall is often over twenty feet, and in the centre a rude arched way is made, merely by piling together the great stones so as to leave an opening, which narrows at the top in the form of a Gothic arch. Within the passage, there are five niches in the outer side, made of rude arches in the same way as the main passage. The length of the passage I measured, and found it twenty-five yards, at the end of which it is regularly walled-up, so that it evidently did not run all the way round. The niches are now no longer open, but seem to have been once windows, or at least to have had some look-out points into the hill country.

It is remarkable that, although the walls are built of perfectly rude stones, the builders have managed to use so many smooth surfaces looking outward, that the face of the wall looks quite clean and well built.[1] At the south-east corner of the higher and inner fort, we found a large block of red granite, quite different from the rough grey stone of the building, with its surface square and smooth, and all the four sides neatly bevelled, like the portal stones at the treasury of Atreus. I found two other red granite stones close by, which were likewise cut smooth on the surface. The intention of these stones we could not guess, but they show that some

[1] The same effect is observable in Staigue Fort, in the county of Kerry, and has led some people to imagine that its stones were rudely quarried. Cf. the splendid photographs of this Irish Tiryns in Lord Dunraven's *Notes on Irish Architecture.*

ornament, and some more finished work, must have once existed in the inner fort. Though both the main entrances have massive towers of stone raised on their right, there is a small postern at the opposite or west side, not more than four feet wide, which has no defences whatever, and is a mere hole in the wall.

I enter into these details because they vary a good deal from the descriptions of other very trustworthy travellers. I do not mean to impute to them carelessness or inaccuracy,[1] but rather desire to insist that the truth can only be certainly known by every honest observer putting down strictly what he sees and observes.

The whole ruin is now covered with thistles, such as English people can hardly imagine. The needles at the points of the leaves are fully an inch long, extremely fine and strong, and sharper than any two-edged sword. No clothes except a leather dress can resist them. They pierce everywhere with the most stinging pain, and make antiquarian research in this famous spot a veritable martyrdom, which can only be supported by a very burning thirst for knowledge, or the hope of future fame. The rough masses of stone are such that footing is insecure, and when the traveller loses his balance, and falls among the thistles, he will wish that he had gone to Jericho, or even fallen among thieves on the way.

[1] I must say that most pictures of Tiryns in books on Greek antiquities are quite false.

CHAPTER XI.

ARGOS, NAUPLIA, AND COAST OF ARGOLIS.

WE rode down from Mycenæ to Argos late in the evening, along the broad and limpid stream of the river Inachus, which made us wonder at the old Homeric epithet, *very thirsty*, given to this celebrated plain.[1] Though the night was getting dark, we could see and smell great wild fields of rose-red oleander, blooming along the river bed, very like the rhododendrons of our demesnes. And, though not a bird was to be heard, the tettix, so dear to the old Greek, and so often the theme of their poets, was making the land echo with its myriad chirping. Aristophanes speaks of it as crying out with mad love of the noon-day sun.[2]

[1] *πολυδίψιον.* A fragment of Hesiod (quoted by Eustathius *in Il.*, p. 350) notes this epithet, in order to account for its being no longer true, *Ἄργος ἄνυδρον ἦον Δαναὸς ποίησεν ἔνυδρον.* Strabo (VIII. p. 256) explains it by confining the epithet to the town of Argos, which Homer certainly did not, and by admitting that the country was well watered. Pausanias (II. 15, 5) says that all the rivers ran dry, except in rainy weather, which is not true now.

[2] *ἀλλ' ἀνθηρῶν λειμώνων, φύλλων τ' ἐν κόλποις ναίω,*
ἡνίκ' ἂν ὁ θεσπέσιος ὀξὺ μέλος ἀχέτας
θάλπεσι μεσημβρινοῖς ἡλιομανὴς βοᾷ. (*Aves*, 1092-8).

We found it no less eager and busy in late twilight, and far into the night. I can quite understand how the old Greek, who hated silence, and hated solitude still more, loved this little creature, which kept him company even in the time of sleep, and gave him all the feelings of cheerfulness and homeliness which we, northerns, in our wretched climate, must seek from the cricket at the fire-side.

At ten o'clock we rode into the curious, dark streets of Argos, and, after some difficulty, were shown to the house of a gentleman who volunteered to be our host—a medical man of education and ability, who, in spite of a very recent family bereavement, opened his house to the stranger, and entertained us with what may well be called in that country real splendour. I may notice that he alone, of all the country residents whom we met, gave us wine not drenched with resin—a very choice and remarkable red wine, for which the plain of Argos is justly celebrated. In this comfortable house we slept, I may say, in solitary grandeur, and awoke in high spirits, without loss or damage, to visit the wonders of this old centre of legend and of history.

The little known lines in the *Shield of Hercules* are also worth quoting (393, *sqq.*):—

> ἦμος δὲ χλοερῷ κυανόπτερος ἠχέτα τέττιξ,
> ὄζῳ ἐφεζόμενος, θέρος ἀνθρώποισιν ἀείδειν
> ἄρχεται, ᾧ τε πόσις καὶ βρῶσις θῆλυς ἐέρση,
> καί τε πανημέριός τε καὶ ἠῷος χέει αὐδὴν
> ἴδει ἐν αἰνοτάτῳ, ὁπότε χρόα Σείριος ἄζει.

It is very easy to see why all the Greek legends have placed the earliest empires, the earliest arts, and the earliest conquests, in the plain of Argolis. They speak, too, of this particular plain having the benefit of foreign settlers and of foreign skill. If we imagine, as we must do, the older knowledge of the East coming up by way of Cyprus and Crete into Greek waters, there can be no doubt that the first exploring mariners, reaching the barren island of Cerigo, and the rocky shore of Laconia, would feel their way up this rugged and inhospitable coast, till they suddenly came in sight of the deep bay of Argolis, reaching far into the land, with a broad plain, and alluvial soil beyond its deepest recess. Here, first, they would find a suitable landing-place, and a country fit for tillage; and here, accordingly, we should expect to find, as we actually do, the oldest relics of habitation, beyond the huts of wandering shepherds or of savages. So the legend tells us that Cyclopes came from Lycia to King Prœtus of Argos, or rather of the Argive plain, and built him the giant fort of Tiryns.[1]

This was evidently the oldest great settlement. Then, by some change of fortune, it seems that Mycenæ grew in importance, not impossibly because of the unhealthy site of Tiryns, of which the surroundings are now low and marshy, and were, probably,

[1] These Cyclopes, cunning builders, and even workers in metal, are to be carefully distinguished from the rude and savage Cyclopes represented in Homer's Odyssey as infesting Thrinacria, in the western seas

even more so in those days. But the day of Mycenæ's greatness also passed away in historical times; and the third city in this plain came forward as its ruler—Argos, built under the huge Larissa, or hill fort, which springs up from the surrounding mountains, and stands like an outpost over the city.[1] Even now it is perhaps the most important place, next to Athens, which we saw in Eastern Greece, and maintains, in the midst of its smiling and well-cultivated plain, a certain air of brightness and prosperity which is hardly to be seen elsewhere through the country.

We went first to see the old theatre, certainly the most beautifully situated, and I think the largest I had ever seen. It is far finer than even that of Syracuse, and whoever has seen this latter will know what such a statement implies. If the Greek theatre at Syracuse has a view of the great harbour and the coast around, this view can

[1] In the days of the composition of the Iliad we see the power and greatness of Mycenæ distinctly expressed by the power of Agamemnon, who appears to rule over all the district and many islands. Yet the great hero, Diomedes, is made the sovereign of Argos and Tiryns in his immediate neighbourhood. This difficulty has made some critics suppose that all the acts of Diomedes were foisted in by some of the Argive reciters of the Iliad. Without adopting this theory, which seems to me extravagant, I would suggest that, in the poet's day, Argos was rapidly growing into first-rate importance, while all the older legends attested the greatness of Mycenæ. Thus the poet, who was obliged to put together the materials given him by divers older and shorter poems, was under the difficulty of harmonizing the fresher legends about Argos with the older about Mycenæ.

only have been made interesting by crowded shipping and flitting sails, for the whole incline of the country is very gradual, and not even the fort of Ortygia presents any bold or striking outline. From the higher seats of the theatre of Argos, which lie much steeper than those of Syracuse, there is a most enchanting prospect to the right, over a splendid, rich plain, covered, when we saw it, with the brilliant emerald-green of young vines and tobacco fields, varied with the darker hue of plane-trees and cypresses. After the wilderness through which we had passed, this prospect was intensely delightful. Straight before us, and to the left, was the deep blue bay of Argolis, with the white fortifications of Nauplia crowning its picturesque Acropolis. All around us, in every other direction, was a perfect amphitheatre of lofty mountains. I have no hesitation in saying that this bay is far the most beautiful I ever saw, and this opinion, which we then formed, was strengthened by a sunset view of it from the other side—from Nauplia—which was, if possible, even finer, and combined all the elements which are conceivable in a perfect landscape.

The theatre was built to hold an enormous audience. We counted sixty-six tiers of seats, in four divisions—so differing from the description of Colonel Leake, which we had before us at the time. As he observes, there may be more seats still covered with rubbish at the bottom—indeed this, like all

the rest of Argos, ought to yield a rich harvest to the antiquarian, being as yet almost virgin soil, and never yet ransacked with any care. All the children about brought us coins, of all possible dates and descriptions, but were themselves more interesting than their coins. For here, in Southern Greece, in a very hot climate, in a level plain, every second child is fair, with blue eyes, and looks like a transplanted northern, and not like the offspring of a southern race. After the deep-brown Italian children, which strike the traveller by their southernness all the way from Venice to Reggio, nothing is more curious than these fairer children, under a sunnier and hotter sky; and it reminds the student at once how, even in Homer, yellow hair and a fair complexion is noted as belonging to the King of Sparta. This type seems to me to prevail, wherever there has not arisen a mixed population, such as that of Athens or Syra, and where the inhabitants appear to live as they have done for centuries. Many people think that the old Greek race is completely gone, and that the present people are a mere mixture of Turks, Albanians, and Slaves. To this many answers suggest themselves, to me, above all things, the strange and accurate resemblances in character between old and modern Greeks—resemblances so strong that, when people at Athens came to read my studies on social life in old Greece, they at once said that these sketches were drawn from the modern Greeks. And yet

at the time I knew nothing whatever of the country as it now is, and took my materials exclusively from classical literature.

But this is a kind of evidence not easily stated in a brief form, and consists after all of a large number of minute details. The really strong argument seems to me to be from language.[1] There is really very little change between the language of Plato and that of the present Greeks. There is, of course, development and decay, there are differences of idiom and corruptions of form, but the language is essentially the same. The present Greek will read the old classics far better at first sight than our peasants could read Chaucer. It is, in fact, most remarkable, assuming that they are the same people, how their language has not changed more. This appears to me an argument of great force. Had the invaders during the middle ages really become the main body of the population, how is it that they abandoned their own tongue, and adopted that of the Greeks? Surely there must be at least a fusion of different tongues, if the population were considerably leavened. There are still Albanian

[1] A great authority, whose opinion I deeply respect—Prof. Sayce—goes so far as to say that language is by itself no proof of race, but only of social contact. I will not venture to deny that there are instances where this is so, and where invading strangers have adopted the language of the vanquished, though quite foreign to them. But surely this is the exception, and not the rule, and there is a *primâ facie* probability in favour of a well preserved language indicating a well preserved race.

districts in Greece. They are to be found even in Attica, and not many miles from Athens. But these populations are now perfectly distinct from the Greeks, and their language is quite different, and not intelligible to Greeks who have not learned it.

Again, the Greek language is not one which spread itself easily among foreigners, and did not give rise to a number of daughter languages like the Latin. In many Greek colonies, barbarians learned to speak Greek with the Greeks, and to adopt their language at the time; but in all these cases, when the Greek influence vanished, the language decayed, and finally gave place to the old language which it had temporarily displaced. Thus the evidence of history seems to suggest that no foreigners were ever really able to make that subtle tongue their own, and even now we can feel the force of what Aristotle says, that however well a stranger might speak it, you could recognise him at once by his use of the particles.

These considerations seem to me conclusive that whatever admixtures may have taken place, the main body of the people are what their language declares them to be, essentially Greeks. Any careful observer will not fail to see through the wilder parts of the Morea types and forms which are equal to those which inspired the old artists. There are still among the shepherd boys splendid lads who would adorn a Greek gymnasium, or excite the praise of all Greece at the Olympian games. There

are still maidens fit to carry the sacred basket of Athene. Above all, there are still many old men, fit to be chosen for their stalwart beauty to act as *thallophori* in the Panathenaic procession.

These thoughts often struck us as we went through the narrow and crowded streets of Argos, in search of the peculiar produce of the place—uncoloured silks, rich-coloured carpets and rugs, and ornamental shoes in dull red 'morocco' leather.

We were brought to see the little museum of the town, a very small museum with one inscription, and three pieces of sculpture. But the inscription, which is published, is exceedingly clear and legible, and the fragments of sculpture are all both peculiar and excellent. There is a female head of great beauty, about half life size, and from the best, or certainly a very good, period of Greek art, which has the curious peculiarity of one eye being larger than the other. It is not merely the eyeball, but the whole setting of the eye, which is slightly enlarged, nor does it injure the general effect. The gentlemen who showed it to me, and who were all very enthusiastic about the head, had indeed not noticed this feature, but recognised it at once when pointed out to them. Beside this trunkless head is a headless trunk of equal beauty—a female figure without arms, and draped with exquisite grace in a manner closely resembling the famous Venus of Melos. The figure has one foot slightly raised, and set upon a duck, as is

quite plain from the general form of the bird, though the webbed feet are much worn away, and the head gone. M. Émile Burnouf told me that this attribute of a duck would determine it to be either Athene or Artemis. If so, the general style of the figure, which is very young and slight, speaks in favour of its being an Artemis. I trust photographs of this excellent statue may soon be made, and that it may become known to art students in Europe.

The third and last object is a relief larger than life, on a square block of white marble, of the head of Medusa. The face is calm and expressionless, exactly the reverse of Lionardo da Vinci's matchless painting, but archaic in character, and of good and clear workmanship. The headdress, which has been finished only on the right side, is very peculiar, and consists of large scales starting from the forehead, and separating into two plaits, which become serpents' bodies, and descend in curves as low as the chin, then turning upward and outward again, till they end in well-formed serpents' heads. The left serpent is carved out perfectly in relief, but not covered with scales.

I was unable to obtain any trustworthy account of the finding of these marbles, but they were all fresh discoveries, especially the Medusa head, which had only been lately brought to the museum, when we were at Argos. There can be little doubt that future visitors will find this valuable collection

much increased, and here, in this important town, it is most advisable that there should be a local museum.

I am tempted to digress here for a moment, and to speak of the Argive school as a school of art, inasmuch as it seems hardly to have received sufficient attention from the *dilettanti* who study these matters. If we look at Dorian art, as contrasted with Ionian, there can be no doubt that the earliest centre was Corinth in the Peloponnesus, to which various discoveries in art are specially ascribed. In architecture, there were many leading ideas, such as the setting up of clay figures in the tympanum of their temples, and the use of panels or soffits, as they were called, in ceilings, which came first from Corinth. But when we descend to better-known times, there are three other Dorian states which quite eclipse Corinth, because, I suppose, the trading instinct, as is sometimes the case, crushed out or weakened her enthusiasm for art. These states are Ægina, Sicyon, and Argos. Sicyon rose to greatness under the gentle and enlightened despotism of Orthagoras and his family, of whom it was noticed that they retained their sovereignty longer than any other dynasty of despots in Greece. Ægina seems to have disputed the lead with Corinth as a commercial mart, from the days of Pheidon, whose coinage of money was always said to have been first practised at

Ægina.[1] The prominence of Ægina in Pindar's Epinician Odes shows not only how eagerly men practised athletics, and loved renown there, but how well able they were to pay for expensive monuments of their fame. Their position in the Persian war, among the bravest of the Greeks, corroborates the former part of my statement; the request of an Ionian Greek lady, captured in the train of Mardonius, to be transported to Ægina, adds evidence for the second, as it shows that, to a person of this description, Ægina was the field for a rich harvest, and we wonder how its reputation can have been greater in this respect than that of Corinth.[2] But, a short time after, the rise of the Athenian naval power crushed the greatness of Ægina, and it sank, first, to insignificance, and then to absorption into the Attic power.

Thus Sicyon and Argos remained, and it was precisely these two towns which produced a special school of art, of which Polycletus was the most distinguished representative. Dorian sculpture had originally started with figures of athletes, which were dedicated at the temples, and were a sort of collateral monument to the odes of poets, more durable, no doubt, in the minds of the offerers, but, as time has shown, perishable and gone, while the winged words of the poet have not lost even the

[1] This fact strengthens my conviction that at an early period Ægina worked the silver mines of Laurium.

[2] Cf. Pindar's Frag. for the Corinthian ἑταῖραι.

first bloom of their freshness. However, in contrast to the flowing robes and delicately-chiselled features of the Ionic school, the Dorians reproduced the naked human figure with great accuracy, while in the face they adhered to a stiff simplicity, regardless of individual features, and still more regardless of any expression save that of a vacant smile. This type, found in its most perfect development in the Æginetan marbles, was what lay before Polycletus, when he rose to greatness. He was the contemporary and rival of Phidias, and is said to have defeated him in a competition for the temple of Hera at Samos, where two or three of the greatest sculptors modelled a wounded Amazon, and Polycletus was adjudged the first place. There is some probability that one of the Amazons now in the Vatican is a copy of this famous work, and, in spite of a clumsily-restored head and arms, we can see in this figure the great simplicity and power of the artist in treating no very grateful subject—that of a very powerful and muscular woman.

The Argive school, owing to its traditions, affected single figures much more than groups, and this, no doubt, was the main contrast between Polycletus and Phidias—that, however superior the Argive might be in a single figure, the genius of the Athenian was beyond all comparison in using sculpture for groups and processions as an adjunct to architecture. But there was also in

the sitting statue of Zeus, at Olympia, a certain majesty which seems not to have been equalled by any other known sculptor. The Attic artist who seems to me to have been much nearer to Polycletus in style was Myron, whose *Discobolus* has reached us in some splendid copies, and who seems to have had all the Dorian taste for representing single athletic figures, with more life and more daring action about them than was attempted by Polycletus.[1]

Herodotus notices somewhere that, at a certain period, the Argives were the most renowned in Greece for music. It is most unfortunate that our knowledge of this branch of Greek art is so fragmentary that we are wholly unable to tell in what the Argive proficiency consisted. We are never told that the Doric scale was there invented; but, very possibly, they may have taken the lead among their brethren in this direction also, for it is well known that the Spartans, though excellent judges, depended altogether upon foreigners to make music for them, and thought it not gentlemanly to do more than criticise.

The drive from Argos to Nauplia leads by Tiryns, then by a great marsh, which is most luxuriously covered with green and with various flowers,

[1] The bronze cow of Myron seems also to have been a wonderfully-admired work, to judge from the crowd of epigrams written upon it, which still survive.

and then along a good road all the way into the important and stirring town of Nauplia. This place, which was one of the oldest settlements, as is proved by Pelasgic walls and tombs high upon the overhanging cliffs, was always through history known as the port of Argos, and is so still, though it rose under the Turks to the dignity of capital of the whole province of Greece. The citadel over the town has at all times been considered almost impregnable. The situation of the town is exceptionally beautiful, even for a Greek town, and the sunset behind the Arcadian mountains, seen from Nauplia, with the gulf in the foreground, is a view which no man can ever forget.

A coasting steamer, which goes right round all the Peloponnesus, took us up with a great company, who were hurrying to Athens for the elections, and brought us round the coast of Argolis, stopping at the several ports on the way. This method of seeing either Greece or Italy is highly to be commended, and it is a great pity that so many intelligent people adhere strictly to the quickest and most obvious route, so missing many of the really characteristic features in the country which they desire to study. Thus the Italian coasting steamers, which go up from Messina by Naples to Genoa, touch at many not insignificant places, such as Gaeta, which no ordinary tourist ever sees, and which are nevertheless among the most beautiful places in all the country. The same may be

said of the sail from Nauplia to Athens, which leads you to Hydra, or Idria, as they now call it, and to Poros, both very curious and interesting places to visit.

The island of Hydra was, in old days, a mere barren rock, scarcely inhabited, and would probably never have changed its reputation but for a pirate settlement in a very curious little harbour, with a very narrow entrance, which faces the main shore of Argolis. As you sail along the straight coast line, there seems no break or indentation, when suddenly, as if by magic, the rocky shore opens for about twenty yards, at a spot marked by several caves in the face of the cliff, and lets you see into a circular harbour of very small dimensions, with an amphitheatre of rich and well-built houses rising up all round the water. Though the water is very deep, there is actually no room for a large fleet, and there seems not a yard of level ground, except where terraces have been artificially made. High rocks on both sides of the narrow entrance hide all prospect of the town, except from the point directly opposite the entrance.

These people, who were rich merchants, and, I suppose, successful pirates in the Turkish days, were never enslaved, but kept their liberty and their wealth by paying a tribute to the Porte. They developed a trading power which reminds one strongly of the old Greek cities; and so faithful were they to one another, that it was an ordinary

habit for citizens to entrust all their savings to a captain starting for a distant port, to be laid out by him to the best advantage. It is said that they were never defrauded of their profits. The Turks may, perhaps, have thought that by gentle treatment they would secure the fidelity of the Hydriotes, whose wealth and power depended much on Turkish protection; but they were greatly mistaken. There was, indeed, some hesitation among the islanders, when the war of liberation broke out, what part they should take; but at last the spirit of nationality actually outweighed private interests, and the Hydriotes sacrificed everything by the marvellously eager and brave way in which they threw themselves into the national conflict. By far the most brilliant feats in the war were those performed by the Hydriote sailors, who remind one very much of the Zealanders in the wars of Holland against the Spanish power. Whether their bravery has been exaggerated is hard to say. This, at all events, is clear, that they earned the respect and admiration of the whole nation, nor is there any nobility so recognized in Greek society as descent from the Hydriote chiefs who fought for the liberation.

With the rise of the nation the wealth and importance of Hydra has strangely decayed. Probably the Piræus, with its vast advantages, has naturally regained its old importance, now that every part of the coast and every port is equally

free. Still, the general style and way of living at Hydra reminds one of old times; and if the island itself be sterile, the rich slopes of the opposite coast, covered with great groves of lemon-trees, are owned by the wealthy descendants of the old merchants.

A few hours brings the steamer past Poros and through narrow passages among islands to Ægĭna, as they now call it. We have here an island whose history is precisely the reverse of that of Hydra. The great days of Ægina (as I mentioned above) were in very old times, from the age of Pheidon of Argos, in the seventh century B.C., up to the rise of Athens' democracy and navy, when this great centre of literature, art, and commerce was absorbed in the greater Athenian empire.

There is at present a considerable town on the coast, and some cultivation on the hills; but the whole aspect of the island is very rocky and barren, and as it can hardly ever have been otherwise, we feel at once that the early greatness of Ægina was, like that of Hydra in the last century, a purely commercial greatness. With enterprise and diligence, a nation or a city may readily become great in a small island or barren coast, and no phenomenon in history proves this more strongly than the great empire of the Phœnicians, who seem never to have owned more than a few miles of barren coast about Tyre and Sidon. They were, in fact, a great people without a country.

The Venetians similarly raised an empire on a salt marsh, and at one time owned the whole Morea and many other great possessions, without 'any visible means of subsistence,' as they say in the police courts. In the same way, Pericles thought nothing of the possession of Attica, provided the Athenians could hold their city walls and their harbours. He knew that with a maritime supremacy they must necessarily be lords of so vast a stretch of coasts and islands, that the barren hills of Attica might be completely left out of account. Assuredly, if in early and savage conditions nature rules man, at a more advanced period man seems almost absolutely to control nature.

The way from Ægina to Athens has already been described at the commencement of these studies, which I was unable to extend over the whole of the country, owing to the lateness of the season and the increasing heat of the weather. About the end of June the climate becomes unwholesome, and the traveller is liable to low fever. I will, therefore, seek to compensate for the incompleteness of my description of Modern Greece by an additional chapter upon some developments of old Greek art, which have been briefly alluded to in the foregoing pages. What I am about to say will, I trust, be useful to the general reader, and give him some idea of the main results of modern research upon these interesting but very difficult topics.

CHAPTER XII.

GREEK MUSIC AND PAINTING.

THE attainments of the Greeks in architecture and in sculpture are still sufficiently preserved to enable us to form a clear judgment of their merits, and to make them models for our imitation. So also their writings, both in poetry and artistic prose, have remained to us in sufficient quantity to teach us both the principles and the practice of Greek artists in literature. The remnants of all these products of Greek genius are, indeed, but miserable fragments of the boundless wealth of the nation. They are defaced by time, corrupted in transmission, deformed by restoration. But still the difficulty of destroying them on the one hand, and the ease of preserving and multiplying them on the other, have prevented their total loss, and have saved for us some knowledge of the greatest outcome of human genius.

The case is very different with their music and their painting. Not a single specimen of the great compositions of the Greeks in colour and in sound has survived. We have many enthusiastic descrip-

tions of these works; we are told a great deal of their effects on those who enjoyed them; they are not in any way postponed by the critics to the splendid sculpture and architecture with which they were combined or compared. It is only by obscure and doubtful inferences, and by the accidental preservation of four or five tunes by inferior composers, that we can attempt to extract from the dry discussions on musical theory what sort of thing practical Greek music really was. In painting the case is a little better. We have in the wall paintings of Pompeii, and in those excavated on the Esquiline and Palatine at Rome, specimens of what decorative painting had reached by Roman imitation of Greek art. These paintings are, no doubt, as inferior to their Greek models as all other Roman imitations are, but still they help us to guess what attainment the world had reached in the technicalities of painting, even of a higher kind, such as grouping of figures, and perspective in landscape.

There is a very large number of German books on both these lost arts of the Greeks—books full of learning, and deeply interesting to the special student. But their exceeding dryness and minute detail make them quite unfit for general readers. In England the subject of Greek painting has been entirely neglected, and that of Greek music has not been really sifted till the recent work of Mr. Chappell. But even this very learned and

able writer, who has thrown a flood of light on the musical theory of the Greeks, has not condescended to say much on the moral and social aspects of his subject. I will endeavour to sketch from this side the general impression produced as to Greek music and painting by the extant tunes and pictures, the allusions of classical writers, and the varied discussions of theorists and art critics. I will approach music first.

As culture was much more highly prized among the Greeks than among us, and as they did not spend their time in acquiring languages, it seems certain that music was a more universal and a more important feature in their education than in ours. This conclusion, however, follows even more directly and certainly from the great moral effects which they attached to it. The great majority of allusions to it assume as acknowledged, the fact that some kinds of music stimulate to energy and manliness, while others dispose the mind to effeminacy and luxury. Statesmen and philosophers have this public aspect of music constantly before them. The Spartans punish and prohibit a musician who makes immoral innovations in their traditional music, by adding strings, and thus increasing the semitones and even lesser transitions from note to note.[1] Plato and Aristotle are most

[1] Here is a mediæval parallel, for no doubt Scott had good authority on the point. In *Ivanhoe*, when the captive Prior of Jorvaulx winds a blast for the outlaws to show his accomplishments, Robin Hood an-

solicitous that only certain kinds of major and minor scales shall be allowed in their ideal state, because the others are relaxing or over-exciting to the mind. The evidence on this point is endless, and forms one of the strongest contrasts between Greek and modern notions about music.

The first inference I will draw from this fact is not an obvious one, but one of the greatest importance. We may conclude from it that Greek music was in an elementary state. For the analogy of other nations, and the history of other arts, tell us that the moral effects of music are everywhere strongly felt, until it becomes developed and complicated. Then the pursuit of perfection, and the overcoming of technical difficulties, become an end in themselves, and while people learn deeper and more subtle sources of delight, they forget the moral side of the art. Thus the Chinese, whose music, though good and clear, has not reached a high stage, have always held opinions about its moral effects quite similar to the old Greeks.[1] Indeed, more generally, according as the intellectual strain increases, the emotional effect diminishes, and so we hear of our forefathers shedding tears at the

swers: 'Sir Prior, thou blowest a merry blast, but it may not ransom thee. Moreover, I have found thee—thou art one of those who, with new French graces and Tra-li-ras, disturb the ancient English bugle-notes. Prior, that last flourish on the recheat hath added fifty crowns to thy ransom, for corrupting the true old manly blasts of venerie.'

[1] Cf. Dr. Plath, in the *Transact. of the Munich Academy*, vol. x., part 2, pp. 483, 515, &c.

singing of simple melodies, while no music would probably touch in this way the followers of Schumann and Wagner. The Greek music had, therefore, a greater national importance, because it was far ruder and less developed than ours.

But I am not the least disposed to assert more than a difference of degree between them; and far from believing that the Greeks exaggerated the moral side, I hold that we moderns have unduly lost sight of it. An experience of many years has convinced me that the moral characters of our musicians are directly influenced by the music which they cultivate. The pursuit of any kind of our music, even the severest classical quartets, seems to me inconsistent, in a real lover of them, with other intellectual work of a high order; and the constant singing, or even hearing, of the passionate love songs of the newer Italian operas may be directly injurious to the character. The more beautifully and perfectly the music corresponds to the words of these productions, the more mischievous they are likely to be. Thus the most perfect of love duets, that in Gounod's *Faust*, expresses so forcibly in its perpetual suspensions the hunger and longing of passion, that the mind which feeds upon it must inevitably, though perhaps unconsciously, be stimulated in that direction. When, therefore, we hear it commonly remarked that musicians are jealous and quarrelsome, or that a young man with a good tenor voice is sure to go

to ruin, there may be musical reasons for these observations which did not escape the Greeks, though they are completely ignored now-a-days.

It is no answer to this curious speculation to say that the moral effect belongs to the words employed, and was transferred by mistake to the music. For among the ancients Plato is most vehement on the immorality of instrumental music, apart from words, which indeed he condemns altogether; and in modern times little attention is paid to the words of an Italian love song, provided the general sense is understood, which is usually clear from the character of the music. It is not even true that our purely instrumental music is all of an intellectual type, as might, perhaps, be asserted, for nothing can be more intensely passionate than violin playing, such as we hear it, not, perhaps, from Joachim, but from Wilhelmj or Auer. The same might have been said of Ernst, whose well-known *Elegy* will illustrate clearly what I intend.

The Greeks, then, were agreed about the powerful moral effects of music—bad, if practised according to certain subtle and luxurious innovations; good and humanizing, if practised according to the old national traditions. It seems a plain inference that they must have assumed everybody to have the necessary taste and ear for the purpose, and this they invariably do in their discussions. There is nowhere, so far as I know, a hint that such an one sang

out of tune, or had no ear. Every young gentleman was thought as capable of music as every young lady is now-a-days, nor do we hear this conventional theory ridiculed then as it now is or ought to be. Polybius[1] speaks of the culture of the Arcadians as directly resulting from their diffused musical training; he even directly attributes the barbarous character of a particular town to the neglect of this necessary element in education.

The public festivals of the gods had always something of a choral character, and the preparations for the performance of a tragedy at the feast of Dionysus entailed a great deal of expense and trouble. In such celebrations it was in early times an honour to take part, but they were quite separate from the singing and playing in private society, which were cultivated a good deal at Athens, though not at all at Sparta, where such performances were left to professional musicians. It was, indeed, universally held among Greeks, that an independent gentleman should not spend his life in practising, or in making a slave of himself, for any special purpose.

Professional *virtuosi*, on the other hand, rose gradually in importance and popularity, and in the Macedonian days we even hear of whole orchestras and regular concerts. It appears that music having begun, as it ought, by portraying pure emotion, advanced to attempt the represen-

[1] Lib. IV. *sub. fin.*

tation of external facts—a great blunder in art, to which our *Battles of Prague*, *Battles of Vittoria*, and other such compositions in the last generation, form an obvious parallel. We hear in the days of the Ptolemies, about 250 B.C., of a regular symphony performed at a Delphic feast, in which the contest of Apollo and the Python was represented in five movements with the aid of flutes (or rather clarinettes, αὐλοί), harps, and fifes, without singing or libretto. The conflict itself was represented in the third movement, in which the clarinettes had the chief part, and in a peculiar passage called the *gnashing* (ὀδοντισμός) expressed the noise made by the monster's teeth when struck by the arrows. The next movement expressed the dying struggles of the dragon by the *hissing* (σύριγγες), in which the fifes came out. This elaborate instrumental symphony was merely the development of the old competitions in playing instruments, which had existed at Delphi from very early days.

Such being the general social importance of music, I will say a word about the instruments used by the Greeks, and their methods of tuning them, and also give a specimen of the extant tunes.

Our previous conclusion that the music of the Greeks was undeveloped, as compared with ours, is strengthened by a review of the instrumental aids they had invented. We may put out of account the trumpet, which was of purely military use, and

in the playing of which there were indeed competitions at Olympia, but only trials of loudness. Castanets and cymbals are rather rhythmical noise than music. We hear of a water-organ, and may suppose a wind-organ to have anticipated it, but both seem rather Roman-Greek than early Greek inventions. The double flute, also, with its bandage about the mouth, seems to have had only a single note on one of the pipes, and to have represented our bagpipes.

It thus appears that as the principle of bowing on strings was unknown, and as wire strings were equally so, Greek music was confined to twanging the gut-strings of instruments made on the principle of either the harp or the guitar, and to blowing reeds or pipes, analogous to the principle of our fife or flute, and our clarinette or hautboy. These were at first used as accompaniments to the voice, then separately, then conjointly and together with singing. The descriptions of the instruments are not very clear, but are greatly assisted by the accurate pictures we have of the corresponding instruments among the Egyptians, whose music appears to have been adopted by the Greeks. Indeed all the musical terms for playing are very much confused, so much so that one instrument, the *μάγαδις*, is sometimes spoken of as a stringed, sometimes as a wind instrument.

What sort of music did the Greeks make with these instruments, and their voices? This is, after

all, the practical question which the reader desires to see answered. Of course, there are two branches of the question—that of melody and that of harmony. As to melody, we have actually the remaining tunes, which are not good, in spite of the enthusiasm of the Germans about them. Only one of them is alleged to be by a celebrated master; it is the music of one of Pindar's odes, and, unfortunately, rests upon the copy of the Jesuit Kircher, two centuries ago, who alleged that he found it in a MS., which has never since been traceable. The composition, however, bears internal marks of being genuine, though it may be inaccurately copied, and this is the more likely, as the comparison of various MSS. on the other hymns shows considerable variation. But these are by late composers, and may, possibly, be bad specimens of Greek tunes. Most unfortunately, no accompaniments have been preserved (except one of a few bars, without its air), so that we are left to pure conjecture as to how the Greeks assisted the voice with instruments. It is also remarkable that the chorus part of Pindar's ode is written in instrumental notes, which were quite a separate set of signs from the vocal.[1]

[1] We are completely informed about both these notations, which were based on the letters of the alphabet, and were applied to scales before the intervals were properly understood. Thus, in the vocal notation A and B both stand for quarter tones between our G and F. Γ is F. Then Δ and E stand for minute intervals between our F and E. Z is E.

But it seems quite certain that vocal part music was not used by the Greeks, and that any harmony they knew was confined to instruments; but, possibly, men and boys may have sung together in octaves, with a full accompaniment—a sort of music with which I was greatly struck when I heard it in the Jewish synagogue at Pesth. Another point, urged by Westphal, indicates that ancient melody was not meant to vary with varying expression in the words, like our modern tunes. The antistrophe in the Greek tragedies was certainly sung to the same music—possibly an octave up or down—as the strophe. Nevertheless, the tone of the words is often quite different.[1]

I now give, for the musical reader's benefit, the notes of the best of the extant hymns. It dates

In this way 24 signs are used within an octave, and a second octave is noted with a distorted alphabet on the same principle. The instrumental notation had sixteen letters, used in three positions, thus, E, 𝍉, 𝍈, for our C, C♯, C♭; ⊢, ⊥, ⊣, for D, D♯, D♭. These signs, with certain additions above and below, of later origin, make sixty-four signs in all. Cf. the elaborate discussions on these notations in Westphal's *Musik der Griechen*, and in Fortlage's article in *Ersch and Gruber*. The omission of them in Mr. Chappell's book is to be regretted.

[1] On this I must remark that Euripides, who, with the greater development of music, probably felt the defect, does not generally change the subject of his choral odes until the commencement of a new strophe. The first pair of verses (so to speak) are often philosophical and general; the second approach the special subject of the act: cf. the choruses in *Alcest.* 962, *sqq.*; *Medea*, 824, *sqq.*; *Hippol.* 723, *sqq.*, 1100, *sqq.*; *Heraclid.* 829, *sqq.*; and elsewhere. This tendency increased in after years, and antistrophic odes went out of fashion.

from the Roman-Greek epoch, but has good words, and may have been thought a good composition, though we have no evidence on the point. In fixing the rhythm, I have been led absolutely by the metre of the words, which is very plain and marked, and this version differs accordingly from that of my friend Mr. Chappell,[1] who, like Brill and other German authorities, desires to maintain a fixed *tempo* all through the melody.

HYMN TO APOLLO AND THE MUSE.

[1] *History of Music*, p. 169. I have also followed Westphal's reading of the notes, which differs occasionally from Mr. Chappell's, and which thus affords the English reader another version, and, I think, a better one.

There is, of course, this objection to the present reading, that in two or three places long syllables come in the short note of the bar (I have indicated them, with Westphal, by *forzando* marks).[1] But the violence done to the metre by Mr. Chappell's version is a far more serious difficulty.

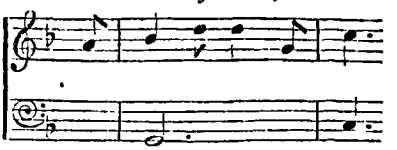
Any modern theorist, to whom this tune was brought as an exercise in melody, would point out that the opening upward progression of a fifth almost compels us to assume D minor as the key with this bass—

but no sooner are we well at home in this key, than we are suddenly brought

[1] The MSS. mark these very notes with a ω, obviously for the same reason.

up by the C natural of the seventh bar, and forced from a chord in G minor into the key of C, thus—

which is inadmissible.



If we endeavour to avoid it by this progression in the bass—

we should continue it through D to C, and this D is in discord with the tune. As almost the same phrase occurs in the next line but one, we are compelled to reconsider our first decision, and declare the tune to be meant from the beginning to move in the key of F. But, then, the opening—

is almost unbearable, and would mark the composer as inelegant, or ignorant.

The amount of modulation in the tune is also very small, and it is altogether a very thankless subject for an ingenious harmonist.

I have printed it in an easier key than Mr. Chappell, because I do not think the question of pitch determined, and we cannot tell certainly how much the old Greek pitch differed from ours. Bellermann shows good arguments (from allusions to the ranges of voices) to prove that it was about a third higher. There can be no doubt that it was gradually raised, so that singing in the original keys became difficult, and there were some *nomes* in which transpo-

sition was not allowed. So it came that Claudius Ptolemy proposed to transpose all the scales a fourth down, and his system seems to have found favour.

The historians do not inform us concerning the history of this change of pitch, but it seems very probable that it arose from the same causes which have sent our pitch up during the last century—a desire in instrumentalists to make their playing more brilliant, and in singers to show off on high notes.

We are left quite in the dark as to the Greek accompaniment, except that it usually ranged higher than the voice, and the curious reader may compare Professor Macfarren's two versions (in Mr. Chappell's book) with Westphal's (*Elemente des Musikalischen Rhythmus*, p. xviii.) They are probably all equally wide of the historic truth.

But before passing on to the question of harmony, I will add what may be inferred as to melody from the extant scientific treatises. At a very early period, it had been discovered that octaves were, in some sense, the same sound, and that the progression downwards recommenced when the octave note had been reached. Hence the division of tones and semitones within the octave was analysed and determined. Three distinct ways of accomplishing this scale were in early use among the nations after whom they are called—the Dorian, the Phrygian, and the Lydian. The early seven-stringed in-

struments were tuned in one or other of these ways, and the earliest accompaniment being either the playing of strict unison with the voice, or in octaves with it, it follows that all songs were composed in these scales.

They differ merely in the position occupied by the semitone intervals, which I have noted thus v ; but this distinctly affects the character of the scale. Thus the Lydian is what we should call major, while the other two are minor scales. It is possible, however, to place the two semitone intervals of a diatonic scale in other positions than those above specified, and thus several other scales, called hypo-Dorian, hypo-Lydian, mixo-Lydian, &c., came gradually into use, in all of which music was composed, and each of which was held to have as distinct a character as the various keys which we now employ. But the reason was different. Our major keys, for example, of A flat and of D natural have the intervals between the notes in the same order; but, as the tuning of our instruments is a system, not of strict intervals, but of accommodation, these scales are not different in pitch only, but, to an appreciable extent, in character, owing to slight differences in the intervals of the

notes. Theoretically, we only allow two scales, the major and minor, though the minor down scale varies from the up scale. The Greeks had seven, each of which varied in the actual progression of the tones, which were separated by accurately determined intervals. Modulation during the course of a melody was only occasional, and within strictly defined limits. Accordingly the distinct effect produced upon Greek ears by each of these scales seems to have been even stronger and more marked than that of the different keys upon modern ears, most of which cannot distinguish in what key the music is, and can only tell major and minor distinctly.

But when instruments of two octave range came into use, it was found that, by adhering to one fixed tuning—that of the natural notes on our piano-fortes—all the scales could be found by varying the note on which each commenced. For example, from C to C we have the Lydian or plain major scale; from E to E we have the Dorian; from A to A the hypo-Dorian. This fact has led to the serious mistake of saying that the Greek scales were mere differences of pitch—a statement very likely to mislead the modern reader. It was only owing to a fixed system of tuning that the various scales became attached to fixed key-notes; and, even then, the scales differed not only in pitch, which was un-essential, but in the arrangement or pro-

gression of the notes, which was the essential feature.[1]

The Greeks were not confined to these diatonic scales; they knew chromatic, and even enharmonic scales, in which they used intervals of quarter tones which are unknown in our notation, though often played on strings, and sung by voices, in *legato* transitions from one note to another. These subtleties were, however, much studied by the Greeks, whose melodies evidently attained an extraordinary elaboration, and would be often quite unintelligible to modern ears.[2] It is remarkable that these very

[1] Sir Robert Stewart has pointed out to me a very interesting parallel in the Irish harp music of the last century. These harps, which included about four octaves, were always tuned to the scale of G, with no sharp except the necessary F sharp. Nevertheless, with this fixed scale, the harpers composed and played tunes in four distinct keys—in that of G (such as the *Coolin*) of course, in that of E minor (*Remember the Glories of Brian*), of D major, and of A minor. Specimens may be found in Bunting's work, but later versions must not be consulted, as singers often modified the tunes by introducing additional sharps suggested by the ear. On the old harps this variety of key was attained by dwelling on the key-note—perpetually returning to it, as Aristotle says the Greeks did, and also by avoiding the phrases which required the additional sharps. The familiar flat seventh in Irish music arose naturally from playing tunes in D major on instruments tuned in G. Thus an ignorant harper might tell us that these old harp tunes only differed in pitch, which distorts the facts of the case, for the pitch is only changed in order to obtain a different key and character.

[2] Fortlage thinks that Greek melody was somewhat analogous to modern harmony. We are not now improving in melody, or making any advances in it, but have of late times been altogether bent on perfecting harmony. The Greeks, in contrast, never thought of making new dis-

small intervals, which can only have been used for passing notes, were, nevertheless, played on stringed instruments, without bowing, and therefore without sliding from one to the other. Yet the effect of rapid execution was such as to bring down storms of applause from great audiences, when this sort of playing was well done, without any accompaniment.

The joyous or sombre character of a scale appeared in them in no way associated with the character which we call major or minor. Thus, their only purely major scale, the Lydian, is always regarded as soft, plaintive, and effeminate; though the hypo-Dorian, which nearly approaches a major scale, was thought manly and vigorous. On the contrary, the Dorian, which is distinctly minor, was thought martial and inspiring; whereas the Phrygian, also minor, was thought orgiastic and passionate. Bellermann has observed, that in the extant fragments the Lydian greatly predominates, and it seems very natural that it should be so; but this was evidently owing to practical musicians being guided by ear, and not from a scientific appreciation of major scales.

On the whole, it is likely that even were several good Greek melodies accurately handed down to us, we are not in a position to understand or

coveries in harmony, but were always devising novelties to improve their melodies. This difference of attitude shows the difficulty of appreciating what the Greeks have written on the subject.

appreciate them, for several reasons: first, because of the different tuning of their instruments, to which I will presently revert. This difference is not merely important in itself, but educated the ear of the nation, and so made them enjoy and dislike with a different taste from ours. I will not assert that the laws of harmony are conventional—the physiological reasons of consonance and dissonance are scientifically established, and must always have guided the human ear; but still, within large limits, melody is a matter of taste, as Wagner and Brahms have proved clearly enough, and by training even one generation, men can come to admire tunes which they once thought hideous. How much more may this be the case with the national training of centuries! While, therefore, I confidently assert that such a phrase as this (from the opening of the Hymn to the Muse)

is very disagreeable, I will not take upon myself to say that Greek melody was positively bad: I will only say that it differed so widely from the music of modern Europe, that its beauties are completely lost upon us.

This argument is greatly strengthened by another reason—the great differences between the Greek notions and ours, concerning harmony. This is, to my thinking, the most difficult problem of

all those with which Greek music abounds for us. For it seems as if one essential element in modern harmony—an element without which it cannot exist—the use of thirds—was absent from ancient concerted music. The ancients tell us a great deal of consonances and dissonances, and are unanimous that octaves, fourths, and fifths are harmonious; but they seem equally agreed that thirds, both major and minor, are discordant, and may not be used. Mr. Chappell has even explained scientifically how this resulted from their tuning, which found the next full tone to any note by going down to the fourth below, and then going up a full fifth. This process, when twice repeated, gives the *ditone* of the Greeks—a greater third, so sharp as to be unbearable. Accordingly, there is no trace of any statement that Greek harmony consisted of three simultaneous notes, nor are there any rules given for it by any of the theorists. Hence, many authors have been led to assert that there was no harmony in Greek music save that of octaves, with fourths and fifths, which, when used consecutively, are very offensive to every good ear. If Greek music was of this kind, it could only be fitly compared to the present music of another very civilised race—the Japanese, who seem to have no concords but these.[1] This may have been the condition of Greek harmony in early days.

[1] Cf. the passage in Mr. Chappell's *History of Music*, I. p. 304.

Fortunately, however, we are in possession of some hints which make us pause before we dismiss the question. It is known that practical musicians (ἁρμονικοί) did not bind themselves by scientific canons—that they followed their ear in preference, and made many modifications not admitted by the theorists (κανονικοί). Thus, they flattened some strings in the tuning; they objected to consecutive fourths and fifths; they even spoke of thirds as παράφωνα, or something between concords and discords—nay, they speak of passing discords as permitted in harmony. Plato, too, in a celebrated passage, speaks of the accompaniment as an elaborate and independent thing from the air, running counter in motion, and using different intervals, as we accompany our modern songs, in contrast with the old hum-drum accompaniments of former generations.

These, and other stray hints which Mr. Chappell and Westphal have gathered with great care, and quite independently, have persuaded them that the Greeks and Romans did know and use harmony in our sense. Every Hellenist will be anxious to agree with them, and to vindicate for the Greeks a high position in this art also. I may add to their arguments that the enharmonic and chromatic tetrachords of Didymus and Ptolemy are based upon the intervals 4 : 5, and 5 : 6, which are the greater and lesser third, and thus show an attempt to recognise these as natural intervals in

music. It is likewise known[1] that in the Middle Ages thirds, though used, were not admitted to be a perfect consonance, and that it required the genius of Descartes to break through this prejudice also, and first declare the truth in his 'Treatise on Music.'

On the other hand, it must be confessed that all the authorities which Mr. Chappell has quoted are comparatively modern—the pseudo-Aristotle, Gaudentius, and the Latins—and that the clearest evidences are certainly those derived from Cicero and Seneca. In fact, all the earlier hints, including the very old Egyptian pictures, are reconcilable with a concord of two notes only. The silence of our authorities as to any rules on the subject is equally striking and inexplicable; nor do I think the extant tunes are in any respect like the tunes we might expect from a nation trained in real harmony. The setting of them in their proper scales, even with modern resources, is awkward and clumsy, as may be seen from the version of such a harmonist as Mr. Macfarren.

I feel therefore obliged to decide upon the evidence before us, that in the great days of Terpander, Alcæus, Sappho, and Pindar, there was little that we could call harmony, and that music was practically in a rude state. It appears that in course of time actual performers may have accommo-

[1] Cf., on both points, Fortlage in *Ersch and Gruber's Encyclop.*, art. *Greece*, vol. II., pp. 198, 207.

dated their instruments to real harmony, and composed real accompaniments; but the theory of music, which had been so advanced in Pythagoras' day, did not keep pace with these practical improvements, and so fell into great arrear, compared with the art. While players and singers were delighting vast audiences, and inventing various combinations of scales and of instruments, the theorists wasted their time on useless subtleties, and did not even amend their instrumental notation, which was framed before the distinction of a full tone and a semitone was properly understood.

We may, therefore, console ourselves for the loss of the elaborate music with which Pindar, Æschylus, Sophocles, and all the other poets, accompanied their splendid odes. I do not believe that it would improve these poems in our ears. It would, no doubt, explain to us many difficulties about rhythms and metres—it would, above all, bring us one step nearer to a full understanding of Greek life; but it would probably not add to our æsthetic pleasure, though it might give us some new elements to work into the music of the future.

With these remarks I leave a subject of which the details are drier and more uninteresting than those of any other phase of Greek art.

When we turn to the history of Painting, we find many analogies to music. It arose among the Greeks as the handmaid to architecture—as music

was to poetry—and found the same difficulty in freeing itself, and rising to the condition of an independent art. Painting, among the Greeks, has, accordingly, the history of an auxiliary art, beginning obscurely, developing late, and rising to dignity and splendour when the greater arts have decayed. The first application of colours, in the painting of stone temples, of wooden statues, of clay vases, was not entrusted to any special artist; indeed, at no period do we hear of great statues being handed over to the painter, so that the colouring must have been thoroughly conventional, and easily applied. This strikes us as evident in the archaic vases, which use but few colours, and apply them without regard to nature. It is true that vase-painting was afterwards looked on with contempt by greater artists; but there can be little doubt that these humbler productions, which ultimately sank into the position of mere tradesman's work, were originally of equal standing and merit with other painting. They have, in fact, preserved to us the archaic features of the nascent art, and from this point of view are of great historical value. There is one class of them, the Attic λήκυθοι or oil-flasks, which have many-coloured figures on a white ground, and which are thought by most competent archæologists to be of peculiar value for the solution of this question.

If we compare these indications of archaic painting with the older sculpture, we find that the Greeks

did not by any means obtain from the use of colour a nearer approach to realism. The eyes of profile faces are always painted full, and in early vases are even conventionally varied, to mark the distinction of sex; those of women being painted of oblong form, white with red pupils, those of men scratched on the vase—a circle, with two strokes attached to it. The flesh of women is painted white, that of men is black or red. But, on the other hand, the early painters used their advantage in portraying violent action, which sculpture could not dare to attempt before the genius of Myron realised the impossible. Thus the old vases often show us rushing figures, and drapery tossed with the wind—features which the poetic instinct of Keats seized as of peculiar interest—

> What men and gods are these? What maidens loath?
> What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
> What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?[1]

But of realism in the sense of anatomical drawing, of perspective—in short, of anything like illusion—old Greek painting was quite ignorant. And, of course, in the absence of perspective, any attempt at landscape was not to be expected, nor did any artist desire to essay it, till new and peculiar circumstances, as we shall presently see, forced it into notice.

Thus Polygnotus, the first painter of really na-

[1] From the *Ode on a Grecian urn.*

tional importance, and all his immediate school, were altogether figure painters, and used the least possible accessories of landscape, if an occasional rock or house can be called such. This great man, a native of Thasos, but settled at Athens, and even promoted to its citizenship, might be called the Phidias of Cimon, on account of his intimate relations with that statesman. His frescoes on the Acropolis were, unfortunately, so decayed, when Pausanias saw them, that he was only able to describe a few figures—a thing much to be regretted, as he has left us a very full and interesting account of a wall painting by the same artist, in the λέσχη, or assembly-room of the Delphians, built as a votive offering by the Cnidians.

The two main walls were covered with two great subjects—the Fall of Troy, and the Visit of Ulysses to the regions of the Dead. These were each painted in two long panels, one over the other, and I fancy, from the way in which Pausanias passes from the lower to the upper panel, and then back again, that they must have been broken by vertical lines in the decoration of the wall. The figures seem not so much grouped as put into a sort of irregular series, with their names—as on the vases—written over them.

Polygnotus and his immediate successors only used or combined four colours—blue-black, yellow, red, and white. He knew nothing of light and shade, or of fore-shortening. Nevertheless Pau-

sanias speaks of various striking effects in his paintings. There were leopard and bear skins represented in them—there was a strand with pebbles, and the sea. There was the river Acheron, with reeds, and sedge, and fishes in the water, which looked like shadows; there was the vampire Eurynomus, painted the colour of a blue-bottle fly, apparently because he devoured human flesh; above all, there were various mental states—grief, indifference, anger—conveyed by these frescoes. But let us always remember that a violent pre-Raphaelite, like Pausanias, will discover pathos and expression in such old work where there is really none. It is said that Polygnotus was the first to depart from the conventional way of painting the human face; yet in his long description, Pausanias does not say one word about the beauty or expression of the faces, merely noting that some have beards, while the majority have none. It seems that all the expression was to be inferred from the attitudes.

The glory of Polygnotus and the honour in which he was held show that the public were thoroughly satisfied with his art; and had Cimon, who was his patron, held sway at Athens, instead of Pericles, it is more than probable that painting would have been the chief ornament of the Parthenon, instead of the sculpture of Phidias and his pupils. But, among other contrasts with Cimon, Pericles was far-seeing enough to know that Greek sculpture was ever to be the greatest of arts, and

the frieze of the cella proclaims his victory over the picture-gallery of the Propylæa, which, even in Pausanias' day, was fading out beyond recognition.

The next step in Greek painting was made, not by a great artist, but apparently by a practical man, working hurriedly, and seeking to meet a growing want—that of adequate stage scenery for the now popular tragedy. This remarkable man, Agatharchus, employed by Sophocles, and, in his later days, by Æschylus, first attacked the question of perspective, which he perceived to depend upon the painting of light and shade. He wrote a tract on the subject, which stimulated the philosophers Anaxagoras and Democritus to study the matter further, and so led the way for the adoption of his principles by Apollodorus (B.C. 400), who is called the first *shade painter* by the Greeks. But it is very significant that the term *scene painter* was used as synonymous. Pliny's remark, that Apollodorus' paintings are the earliest worth looking at, is probably based on a sound appreciation of the requirements of the art, and confirms our suspicion that Polygnotus was (ethically perhaps, but) not æsthetically to be admired. From the days of Apollodorus, however, *figure painting* made rapid progress. Wall decoration became subordinate to the painting of pictures proper; and a long series of great artists, such as Zeuxis, Parrhasius, Pamphilus, Timanthes, and many others, led up to Apelles,

the contemporary of Alexander, who brought this species of painting to an unapproachable perfection.

With the splendid works of the sculptors to rival them, these figure painters had no easy task in maintaining their position; and the fact that the public, accustomed to the bronze and marble of Phidias, Polycletus, Euphranor, and Lysippus, not only tolerated, but delighted in their pictures, shows that they must have had real merit. This is further proved by the technical details preserved to us. They studied light and shade, and perspective, increased the number of their colours, and used varnish to soften and preserve their colouring. The figure subjects preserved to us at Pompeii are in accordance with these evidences. Though they are only the wall decorations of a second-rate mongrel Greek town, there are both grace and power in many of the figures. The colouring is bright and life-like, and the faces full of expression. It is, in fact, a thoroughly realistic art, and bears comparison with the beautiful bronzes of the place, though none of the pictures equals the *Narcissus* or the *fishing Hermes*.

It thus appears that this side of painting attained a splendour and an independence far superior to that of music. It freed itself from all relation to architecture, and great masters, such as Zeuxis and Apelles, enjoyed a social position never accorded to musicians who were mere performers, as dis-

tinguished from poets who composed airs for their own odes. But anyone who chooses to follow up subtle analogies might well occupy himself with the advance from four colours, without light and shade, to all the appliances of Apelles on the one hand; and the similar advance from a three-stringed lyre, or Pandean pipes, to the varied scales and subtle shades of tone in the days of Aristoxenus. If, however, my estimate of the comparatively backward condition of Greek music be just, it will be easy to find in Greek painting a much closer parallel, as regards social position, and general importance—I mean the parallel of *landscape painting.*

I have already explained how figure painting made a new start, as soon as Agatharchus was led by scene painting to study the optical illusions produced by drawing and colour. But surely, we should have thought that these ideas would have been infinitely more useful in the development of landscape painting. It is true that the scenic requirements of the extant plays are not very great. In most cases an architectural background—some royal palace, or temple—is the main feature, and changes of the whole scene were not practicable, as a fixed wooden (and canvass?) structure, of a great height, so as to shut out the natural background, occupied the whole rear of the narrow stage. Two triangular prisms (*περιακταί*), with varied sides, supplied the part of our shifting side-scenes, and were turned on pivots when any modi-

fication was required. Still this kind of landscape should have been accurately studied, not merely in reproducing well-known scenes, such as the groves of Colonus, the Acropolis, or the outlines of Mount Parnes—which would be ridiculous if very unlike—but fancy pictures also, foreign palaces, and cities of strange men. And even beyond this, there are, though rarely, really picturesque scenes presupposed—tented camps on the sea shore, lonely and desert islands, rocky homes of ancient worship. All these subjects should have been stimulated, and their imitation developed, by the scene painting for the great Athenian theatre; and yet nothing is more certain than that landscape painting, as such, did not arise for generations to come. Among all the roll of great painters down to Apelles, there is not one celebrated for depicting scenery, nor is there aught beyond the slightest allusion to the scenery of their figure painting. In fact, the Greeks felt no want of landscape painting, and did not perceive this dark spot in the field of their artistic vision.

This apparent defect in Greek taste has much exercised the critics. It is called a want of feeling for the picturesque; and it has even been inferred that the pleasure in beautiful scenery is of modern growth—a late compensation for the unceasing toil and weariness of mankind. But the general sensitiveness of the Greeks, together with the innumerable proofs in their poetry that they appreciated the *sounds* of nature as we do, show that the matter

cannot be so easily settled. It was not from want of perceiving the beauty of external nature, but from a different way of perceiving it, that the Greeks have not turned their genius to portray, either in colour or in poetry, the outlines, the hues, and contrasts of all the fair valleys, and bold cliffs, and golden noons, and rosy dawns, which their beautiful country affords in lavish abundance.

Primitive people never, so far as I know, enjoy what is called the picturesque in nature. Wild forests, beetling cliffs, reaches of Alpine snow, are with them great hindrances to human intercourse, and difficulties in the way of agriculture. They are furthermore the homes of the enemies of mankind, of the eagle, the wolf, or the tiger, and are most dangerous in times of earthquake or tempest. Hence the grand and striking features of nature are at first looked upon with fear and dislike, so that, even now-a-days, simple peasants, who regard the earth merely as a means of subsistence, feel much wonder at the admiring tourist, and are only taught to understand his taste for the picturesque by the direct benefit it confers upon their pockets.

I do not suppose the early Greeks differed in this respect from other people, except that the frequent occurrence of mountains and forests made agriculture peculiarly difficult, and intercourse scanty, thus increasing their dislike for the apparently reckless waste in nature. We have in Homer even a similar feeling as regards the sea—the sea that

proved the source of all their wealth, and the condition of most of their greatness. Before they had learned all this, they called it 'the unvintageable brine,' and look upon its shore as merely so much waste land. We can, therefore, easily understand how, in the first beginning of Greek art, the representation of wild landscape would find no place, whereas fruitful fields did not suggest themselves as more than the ordinary background. Art in those days was struggling with material nature, to which it felt a certain antagonism.

There was nothing in the social circumstances of the Greeks to produce any revolution in this attitude during their greatest days. The Greek republics were small cities, where the pressure and fatigue of city life was not felt. The Greeks themselves were essentially townsmen, who never desired to see more of the country than its olives and its grapes, and would not accept the rude plenty of a farming life, with its want of refinement and discussion. But, as soon as the days of the Greek republics were over, and men began to congregate for imperial purposes into Antioch, or Alexandria, or, lastly, into Rome, then we see the effect of noise, and dust, and smoke, and turmoil breaking out into the natural longing for rural rest and retirement, so that, from Alexander's day, and beginning with the Alexandrian Theocritus, we find not only bucolic poetry starting into new favour, but all kinds of authors, epic poets, lyrists, novel-

ists, and preachers, agreeing in the praise of nature, its rich colours, and its varied sounds. Hence landscape painting, as such, did not become an independent art till this period, and, even then, suffered from the lateness of its origin, and the decay of Greece in genius; so that, with rare exceptions, architectural subjects and figures predominate, even in this desire to escape from them. We are justified in making this assertion from the many specimens preserved on the walls of Pompeii, from the more important pictures exhumed on the Palatine and Esquiline at Rome, and from detailed notices, such as the εἰκονες of Philostratus, and the criticisms of the elder Pliny.

These natural causes seem to have annulled or counteracted the impulse given to landscape painting by the scene painting of Agatharchus, whose discoveries concerning perspective, as well as his portraiture of known views, ought to have stimulated a school of imitators. We should have expected the many-sided Athenians to have taken up this branch, and, as they had a school of *rhopographers*, or painters of homely life, like the Dutch, they should have had a school of pure landscape painters. The fact that they had not is certain, and the natural causes I have assigned are hardly sufficient to account for it.

Indeed, the knowledge of perspective attained by Democritus and Anaxagoras was either in itself defective, or little propagated, for the architectural

landscapes of Pompeii, in spite of considerable merits in other respects, display most absurd ignorance in their perspective. But this is not the real want in ancient landscapes. It is rather the absence of a deep feeling for nature as such, for its curious symmetry amid countless variety—for its natural contrasts of texture and colour—for its matchless response—now to the vehemence and trouble, now to the peacefulness and repose, of the human breast. How is it possible that the sensitive, poetical Greeks should have missed this infallible comfort, and lived without this most unfailing and perpetual delight? It is an answer, but a very partial one, to say that beauty of landscape is so constant in Greece, that it might fairly be taken for granted, without special allusion. The nations of southern Europe, who live in the fairest clime and the clearest atmosphere, have always left landscape painting to northern artists, where fog, and mist, and dulness of outline give a strange zest to exceptional beauty. How few of the Italian painters have thought of landscape! How few Italians and Spaniards travel to see it! Hence it may fairly be said that we should not expect to find Attic, Ionic, and Theban poets insisting upon things which everybody saw and enjoyed every day. But yet how keen is their enjoyment of the *sounds* of nature! How they loved the swallow and the nightingale, the humming bee and the shrill cicada, the whispering leaves and the murmuring water! The rose,

too, and the violet, the white narcissus and the deep clustering ivy were to them no less fair in colour, or delicious in odour, than they are to modern men. Surely such men could not but feel the beauty of large grouping of mountain, and wood, and water.

They did indeed feel it, but as Greeks, and not as moderns. They did not oppose themselves to nature, and feel their own consciousness contrasted with the spontaneous or instinctive life of nature. To them mountains, and rivers, and forests, were full of conscious life—the home, nay, the impersonation of gods, who thought and felt like men. For their religion, a sort of anthropomorphic pantheism, taught them that all the life of trees and rivers was not unconscious, but the manifestation of a hidden god; and that solitude, as we call it, was peopled with oreads, hamadryads, fauns, and satyrs. They held that in the wild mountains forest gods held their court, and demanded awe and worship from those who entered the bounds of their domain. Thus the old Greek, who spoke of a river or a mountain, named the god whose dwelling-place it was, and remembered the myths and legends of the poets, which, perhaps, made this god his ancestor, or, at least, identified him with the history and fortunes of the country.

The enjoyment of mere landscape was thus excluded, and anticipated, by a deeper sympathy—that humanizing instinct which saw conscious life, and life of a human type, through all the kingdom

of nature. And so it came that to the Greek the most adequate representation of a landscape was a representation of the gods who were identified with its rivers and mountains. The sculptor accordingly took the place, and performed the work, of the landscape painter.

In earlier days, the mere human figure was thought sufficient likeness for a god, and no special care was taken to suit his outward form to the peculiar nature of his attributes, or his special kingdom. Thus, in the famous pediments of the Parthenon, so many personified features of Attica were introduced, that a great art critic—Brunn—has even declared these groups to have been simply plastic landscapes, intended to symbolize all the natural beauties of Attica. The Ilissus, the Cephissus, Mount Parnes, Mount Pentelicus, the fountain Callirrhoe—all these were figured as divine men and women in the coloured marble.

But the fragments which remain do not show any desire to express by peculiar features each peculiar character. The glory of solving this subtle problem was left for those successors of Phidias who, as they could not equal him in grave majesty, sought to exceed him in expression. In the scanty fragments and weak copies of their work, we can still feel distinctly the peculiar genius of two of them in portraying, or rather suggesting, landscape by sculpture. To Scopas was due the fixing of the general type for the great company of gods and

nymphs which inhabited seas and rivers—matted locks of dripping hair, and a longing melancholy of expression, in which the restless moaning of the troubled sea finds its plastic utterance. To Praxiteles was due the analogous type for the forest gods—the fauns and satyrs, which, with their gnarled and knotty joints, and roughness of skin, image even more clearly the sylvan forms which the superstitious traveller saw with terror in the fantastic stems of aged trees. Nay, even in his ideal *Faun*, a creature of perfect beauty—the listening attitude, the Pandean pipe, the indefinable suggestion of wantonness, and of mystery—speak a deeper feeling for the beauty of forest life than could be conveyed by any ordinary landscape painting.

So true is it, that the sculptors were the landscape artists of the Greeks. Accordingly, in later days, when men had advanced to the notion of painting mountains and rivers, as they appeared in nature, the artist hardly ever omits to paint a figure of the god sitting on his mountain, or by his river, thus showing that the actual coloured sketch of the place did not satisfy the spectator without the figure of the being who gave it life, and instinct, and poetry—nay, who alone gave it a distinctive name.

The history of Greek painting is, therefore, in every direction controlled and limited by that of sculpture, which rivalled and outdid it in the ideal-

izing of figures, and which actually invaded its peculiar province in the representation of landscape.

A comparative review of the arts in Greece shows that the most independent and self-contained—Architecture and Poetry—started with the dawn of history, and reached their climax with the political climax of the nation. After the year 400 B.C. there was little more than imitation or repetition attempted in either, till actual debasement set in. Sculpture started later, reached its acme at the same time, but sustained itself with a noble and continuous development, till far into the decay of the nation, as the *Laocoon*, the *Apollo Belvedere*, and the *Dying Gladiator*, testify. Music and painting may have started with sculpture, but were far longer in reaching perfection, so that the highest outcome of both is to be sought in the days when the other arts had passed their prime. They are, in fact, the arts of private life, as contrasted with the political arts of antiquity, and did not take the lead till the society of Menander had said farewell to public affairs, and turned to individual culture as the chief end of life.

THE END.

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